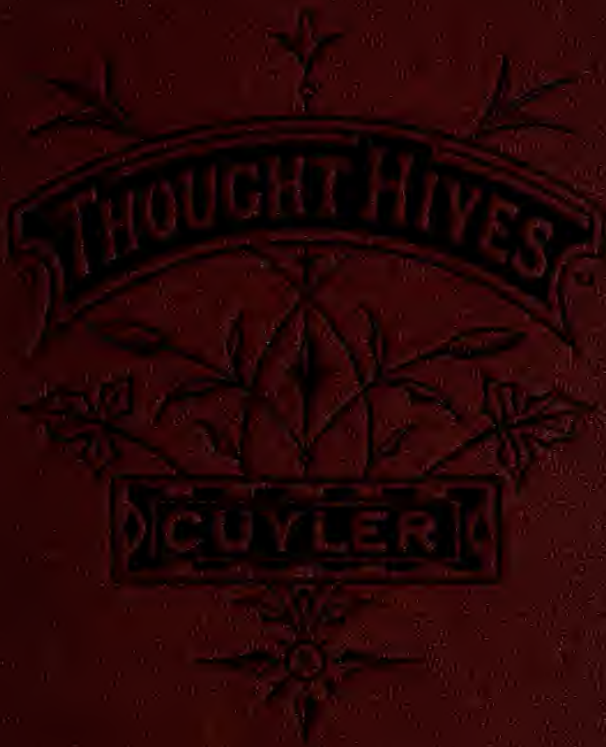
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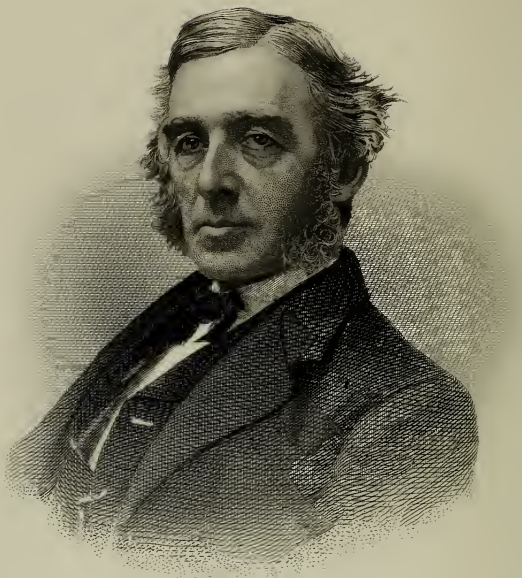

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BY

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THOUGHT-HIVES.

EVERY human mind we meet is a moving thought-hive. To our eye it is hidden; but to the eye of God it is a hive of transparent glass. For there is not a thought in our hearts, but lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. The thoughts which nestle within us, and issue from us in language and in act, determine our moral character. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

The most exquisite piece of sculpture which a Powers or a Palmer ever carved was once only a thought; but their skilful hands smote the white marble until the beautiful images of the brain came forth. Upon the thought of

James Watt and Robert Fulton we cross the trackless sea; while in its silent depths the thought of Professor Morse has laid the magic wire over which two continents converse. All the grandest enterprises of benevolence and all the most stupendous crimes were once only invisible phantoms in some man's or woman's busy brain. The Order of the Jesuits swarmed out of Ignatius Loyola's heart-hive; Sunday Schools swarmed out of Robert Raikes'. If the jailer of Bedford prison had starved John Bunyan, he would have smothered the "Pilgrim's Progress" in its cradle. The very Bible is only God's blessed and holy *thought* revealed to us: by it we are made wise unto salvation.

A person is known by the company he keeps. So the thoughts which we harbor within us, and which go out through the doors of our mouths and our hands, determine our real character. A holy man gives house-room only to pure and godly thoughts; and he is constantly striving to bar up door and window against wicked intruders. Out of the treasure-house within him proceed all the white-winged

words and all the beautiful deeds that are a blessing unto others.

Habitual thinking determines whether an individual is either Christ's or Satan's. As he thinketh, so is he. A sensualist is only a filthy thinker. The walls of his mind are hung around with lascivious pictures: his inmost soul is a brothel. Do a man's thoughts run every day upon the bottle? Then he is a tippler or a sot. Does another man's thought-hive send out its winged messengers continually to gather honey from God's Word and His outlying world of Nature? Then is he a devout and happy being. In such an one God dwelleth by His Spirit.

One of the highest of spiritual luxuries is the enjoyment of pure and exhilarating and sublime thoughts: to such a devout and cheerful thinker a prison may be a palace. "I thought of Jesus," said holy Rutherford, "until every stone in the walls of my cell shone like a ruby." Wherefore let us keep our hearts, our thought-hives, with all prayer and watchfulness; for out of them are the issues of our

life. And no one can handle the pitch of a wicked, obscene, or abominable thought for any considerable time without being defiled thereby. There is no greater torment than to be an unclean or intensely selfish or corrupt thinker. This is a genuine demoniac possession. Such an one is "grievously vexed with a devil." To go through some people's hearts would be like a walk through Sing-Sing penitentiary. Every room has a rascal in it. Out of such hearts proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, covetousness, pride, blasphemy. What a hell in advance to be living in such a habitation of the devil! To *be* such a man or woman for ever is the everlasting punishment of the lost.

All thoughts have their germs. The surest way to kill a sin is to kill it in the egg. At the very moment when a wicked thought is born is the right time to destroy it. These little serpents soon become the anacondas that strangle conscience and ruin character. How important, too, is the nursing into active life and vigor of every good suggestion and holy

aspiration! A noble career depends on the treatment given to the infant ideas that are born in the soul. The best of these are the direct product of the Holy Spirit. To quench a good thought is often a *quenching of the Spirit;* and the eternal damnation of millions has been the result of this sin against the infinite Love.

Christ is the purifier of the heart. He who walks in constant fellowship with Jesus hath the clean heart and the holy life. And an active, prayerful, loving mind, teeming with busy plans of usefulness and swarming out into deeds of daily beneficence, is a hive of blessings, not only to its possessor, but to all who partake of its stores of honey.

Such is the vital importance of pure and inspiring thoughts. And if the following pages shall awaken in any minds such thoughts and induce any to crystallize them into good deeds, then the author will not have written in vain. This volume begins with the beginnings of a true life. It places the *soul first*, and Jesus

Christ as the first necessity of the soul in the divine method of salvation. The duties of the seeker after salvation are made plain at the outset. The momentous question, "What must I do to be saved?" is answered with as condensed brevity and as clear simplicity as we could command. To these words of early guidance follow several chapters of practical counsel for the Christian life. To adapt *doctrine to duty* in the daily conduct must be the highest aim of all faithful teaching from the pulpit or the press, by the tongue or by the pen.

A few leaves from our pastoral experience are in this volume. With these are interwoven some words of exhortation to Christian laymen, who ought to be our "true yokefellows" and helpers in the vineyard of the Master. Household piety has not been overlooked; nor the claims of the tempted at home, or the benighted in heathen lands. We have striven to bring a word of heavenly consolation to the wide and ever-widening circle of "them that mourn." We have endeavored to teach the children of sorrow how to

"suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock." With these pages of practical counsel have been blended a few sketches and biographies of those *hymns* that are appropriate to the heart-experiences set forth. The gospel of Jesus is not only a light unto our path, but "our song in the house of our pilgrimage."

If this humble work shall prove to be a hive of happy or holy thoughts to any fellow-pilgrim, then shall the highest aspirations of its author be more than satisfied. May the Lord make this book like unto that "roll" which the ancient prophet ate, and which was "in his mouth as honey for sweetness"!

THE SOUL FIRST.

IF you have crossed the Atlantic in a mail-steamer, you may have observed how ready the captain was to come into the cabin on a quiet evening, and to minister to the pleasure of his passengers. But if you were suddenly to hear the loud tramp of hurrying feet across the deck overhead, and the hoarse brattling of the first mate's trumpet to "haul in the jib," and "close-reef the top-sails," would you dare to invite the captain to a game of chess, or to listen to an operatic air? No! The sturdy seaman would reply, "In an hour the hurricane may send two hundred souls to the bottom, if every thing isn't made fast. I can't play with you while the gale is playing with my ship."

My unconverted friend, when your soul is saved you may talk about the price of gold,

or the ten per cent that offers to you in some new speculation, or the latest discoveries in the gold regions. Until then. your real *business* must be to flee from the wrath to come, and to lay hold on eternal life. What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

When your soul is saved, you may talk about building the new house, or adorning the present one with pictures and Parisian upholsteries; you may then discuss the new library, or the grand tour, or the series of evening entertainments for your friends. We do not denounce fine dwellings, or paintings, or Parians, or superb libraries, or foreign tours: all these things are to be settled by extent of purse, and the ability to possess them without robbing God or the claims of charity. What we insist is, that no one has any right even to *think* of such things while the soul is yet under the condemnation of unpardoned sin. What right have you to be planning a house when you have never thought of your soul's dwelling-place through an endless eternity? Why insure your property before you have

insured your soul? Why so anxious about getting into "good society" for a dozen or two of years on earth, and yet not a moment's thought about your soul's everlasting companions? Why so ready to prepare for every thing else except to prepare to die?

The simple reason is, that you make this world every thing and eternity nothing. You do not expect to take up your abode in hell, but the business of securing heaven you propose to set about when you have nothing else to do. At present your whole heart is drowned in money-making, or in pleasure-seeking, or in getting, keeping, and enjoying what your heart most covets. If I come to you, Mr. A—, in your counting-room, and whisper that God has a claim upon your soul; if I come to you, young Mr. B—, in your study; or to you, Madame C—, with your bundle of invitations for a daughter's fête beside you, — the prompt answer is, "Please don't interrupt me. I am busy." True enough: you are busy. So was Daniel busy; but he found time to pray thrice a day, and he

served God in every thing he did. You are busy; but so was Wilberforce, who did five men's work at once, and honored God in every act. You are busy, but only busy in the service of self and sin: if not a Christian, you are not busy in serving God. You do not fancy an interruption by one who longs to draw your soul to Christ. Well, my friend, *death* will interrupt you, one of these days. He will not stop to knock at the door of your counting-room, or your new library. He will not wait, perhaps, till the daughter's fête has passed off. He will come when God sends him, and in that moment thy soul will be required of thee.

When Nehemiah was urged to quit the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and go down to a parley with his enemies on the plain of Ono, he replied manfully, "I am doing a *great work*, so that I cannot come down to you." Nehemiah was successful, because single-hearted. And so must you be, if you ever save your soul and serve your God. You must say to the world, when it clamors for

your time, "I am doing a great work. I am seeking the pardon of my sins. I am settling the question of my everlasting destiny. God is calling me, and I am finding my way to him. The Holy Spirit is striving with me; and, if I grieve him away, he may leave me to die as callous as a rock. I have never yet prepared to *live*, much less to die; and I am determined not to give my attention to any thing under the sun, until I have given my heart to Christ."

An earnest, resolute setting about the work of repentance, and of seeking God, seldom fails. Where God's help is invoked, and where the aim of the seeking heart is to please God, it never fails. God is nigh to them who call upon him in spirit and in truth. "Ye shall seek me and find me," he says, "when ye seek for me *with all the heart.*" He demands the heart. He demands the first place in that heart. He demands that his will be made the rule of your life. He demands that you be ready to deny self for his sake. He demands that

you serve him to your dying hour from principle. He offers to you sustaining grace and an everlasting heaven.

This *is* a great work, you confess; "but how shall I accomplish it?" God's answer is, "Work out your salvation; for it is God that worketh in you." "My grace is sufficient for you." Yes, it is a great work; but Christ has done a greater, — he has died to make your salvation possible. It will be *certain*, when you give your heart to him. And when you so desire to be a Christian that you are willing to take up any cross and follow Jesus, when you so desire to be saved that you are willing to pray for it, and not only pray, but give up your favorite sins, and not only forsake sin, but to embrace the Saviour, then the work is done, and you have a right to all the glorious privileges of a child of God. If a child, then an heir, — a joint-heir to heaven's inheritance. *The soul must be first!* And Christ first in the soul! Then "all's well" for time and eternity.

THE GREAT CHOICE.

ALLOW me the privilege of addressing a few plain, affectionate words to one who is yet without a hope in Christ. I address you, my friend, as the possessor of an immortal soul. In the language in which Moses addressed Israel before he went up to his mountain death-bed, "I set before you life and death: *choose life!*" Every one has the power of choice. God made you a free moral agent. The very fact that you are now reading these lines proves that you have the power of choice. Every Christian in the world *is* a Christian simply because he accepted Christ when He was offered. Every impenitent sinner is yet one because he *chooses to be.* There is no decree of the Almighty which forbids your having eternal life, if you desire

to secure it. Perhaps you cavil at "God's *decrees*." Just look at *this* one: "He that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved." Or at this one: "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Or at this one: "Whosoever cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." God's immutable decrees, in fact, secure salvation to every penitent believer and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Joshua submitted the great alternative, "*Choose* ye this day whom ye will serve," he addressed his auditors as free agents. When Christ said to Andrew and James and John, "*Follow me*," he talked to them as rational beings, who had the power of choice. If they could not "follow" him, why did he ask them? When Simon Peter stood up before the mass-meeting in Jerusalem, and exclaimed, "Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost," he addressed them as free agents; and three thousand of them accepted the Divine Saviour.

If you ask me what is meant in the Bible by "*life*," I would answer: It is the favor of God; it is the pardon of your sins; it is the sustaining strength to do right; it is a union of heart to Jesus; it is a divine support in the last hour, and everlasting holiness and joy beyond the grave. "*Death*" is the opposite of life: it is the absence of life. Spiritual death is the unbroken dominion of sin in this world, and the unending punishment of sin in the world to come. In this world the God of mercy says to every one, "I set before you life and death: *choose life.*" In the next world, the divine and all-righteous Judge will say to those who choose life, "Come, ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you." To those who choose death he will say, "Depart, ye cursed!" and they "shall go away into everlasting punishment."

But you may say, "I do *not* choose death. It is impossible that any sane person should deliberately choose to be eternally wretched, when he might be eternally happy." This

seems very plausible, and there is a sense in which it is true. Men do *not* commonly select wretchedness and ruin as the end of their voluntary endeavors. They do not set success and happiness on the one hand and ruin on the other, and then calmly choose to be ruined. Yet it is equally true that men are continually selecting and pursuing courses that inevitably *lead to ruin.*

Here is a young man setting out in life. Of course, his preference is to become rich and prosperous. But he chooses also to lead a career of indolence and thriftlessness, which inevitably brings him to poverty, and keeps him there. His poverty is the fruit of his own conduct. Again, no man voluntarily chooses the disgrace and disease and horrors of drunkenness. But thousands, alas! *do choose* to tamper with the wine-glass and the brandy-bottle, and their own free choice brings them surely to the drunkard's self-damnation. Did that poor girl who gave her heart and hand to the showy vagabond who stole her affections choose to become a wretched wife?

Yet she did choose to marry him; she did it in spite of reason and conscience, and dearly does she pay the consequences of her choice.

In the same manner, my impenitent friend, when you decide to reject the knocking Saviour from your heart, you do choose to risk the awful consequences. When you choose to live on in sin, to follow the devices and desires of your own lusts, and to grieve the Holy Spirit of love, you deliberately choose everlasting death. You choose the road that leads to death. If you are lost, it will be your own fault. It will not be your heavenly Father's fault: he says to you, "Choose life!" It will not be the loving Saviour's fault: he says to you, "Look unto me, and live!" It is not the fault of that patient Spirit of truth, who is now pleading with you to renounce sin and accept the atonement offered to you in the gospel.

It is a delightful thought that your encouragements to seek life are so abundant. The word of God overflows with encouragements.

You may grow discouraged in seeking wealth, or health, or office, or great literary attainments; but no living man or woman need despair of gaining salvation. If you seek it in time, and seek it rightly, it is yours. The only time you are sure of is the *present;* and the only way is, through penitence and faith in the crucified Jesus. Eternal life is now within your reach. It does not depend on intellect, or wealth, or social patronage, or on the will of another. It depends on your own willingness to accept the Saviour, and by divine help to serve him faithfully. God will not hinder you, and Satan cannot hinder you, if you are in earnest. The only being who can destroy you is your own self. God is love; and God sets before you life and death, and says to you with infinite tenderness, "Choose life! Give me thy heart!"

> "There for thee the Saviour stands,
> Shows his wounds, and spreads his hands.
> Christ is love, — this know and feel;
> Jesus weeps, and loves thee still."

Not long since, a friend came into my study

in deep distress of mind: she had been awakened by hearing me preach from the words, "Choose life." She wished to know what she should do. I said, "You have been opposing God all your life. You have shut Christ from your heart. He seeks admission. Let him in. Give yourself all up to him. Choose life." I prayed with her, and besought her to yield herself to Jesus while we were on our knees. After rising up, I handed to her Newman Hall's blessed little book, "*Come to Jesus.*" She laid it down, and modestly said, "I want now to pray too." We knelt once more together; and in sweet, artless language she just poured out her whole soul in penitent petition, and gave herself up to Jesus. She rose with brightened countenance, and said, "I feel more peaceful now." She had made the GREAT CHOICE; she had given her heart to God; and on the next Sabbath she stood up and made a public profession of her faith in the Redeemer. My friend, you can make the same choice. It is only a moment's work, when you are in

earnest. God offers you his help. I have set before you life and death. Before you lay down this book determine to CHOOSE LIFE.

THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.

HOW hard it is for physicians to undeceive a consumptive patient! It is so painful that the office is seldom done. The victim of that flattering disease — which so often selects the fairest for its prey — tells us every day that she is better, and "will soon be out again." The hectic flush which she mistakes for returning health is only a cunning mask behind which death steals in to strike the doomed one to the heart. Such is the deceitfulness of disease.

We could to-day summon ten thousand slaves of the stimulating cup, and not one of them would acknowledge that he intends to become a drunkard. The fatal symptoms of their sin are all too legible in the flushed face, the unsteady gait, and the tipsy talk; and yet they stoutly insist that they "never

take more than is good for them," and that they "know just when to stop." This is Satan's catechism, which every tippler learns. Such is the deceitfulness of evil habit.

Now, just as the victims of a consumption or a cancer deceive themselves, just as the inebriate tries to conceal from himself the fatal serpent in his social glass, so do all impenitent persons deceive themselves as to the nature and enormity of their sins. They regard all sin against God as a light thing. Dishonesty in trade, falsehood, adultery, theft, treason, they understand perfectly to be exceedingly injurious to their victims and to society. But while they are keenly alive to every trespass against commercial integrity or social order, they utterly belittle all *heart-sin* against a holy God. They regard it as a trifle; and secretly a vast majority of impenitent sinners hold that a future hell is an improbability. I once heard a learned judge say that the idea of future punishment was "a ghost-story, only fit to frighten weak-minded women." What his infidel lips

expressed coarsely millions who are *not* "infidels" believe in their inmost hearts. Their "hearts are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" as to the very essence of sin, and as to the extent of their own guiltiness.

We do not exaggerate the importance of a right estimate of sin. This is a vital point in the soul's salvation: it is more than a technic of theology. The nature of sin and its inherent ill-desert is a precise point where the rejectors of future punishment diverge from the path of truth. Only admit that sin is an infinite offence against Jehovah, and their error perishes in a moment, under the direct threatenings of God's Word. It is at this point that Socinians leave us, and leave their Bibles too. They assume that sin is a light and venial thing that may be pardoned without an atonement; and then they discover no need of a Divine Redeemer to "make a propitiation" for the sinner. When a man is thoroughly convicted of his own guiltiness before God, he is seldom disturbed with any Socinian

doubts as to the *necessity* of grasping Christ Jesus as his only Saviour. Sin appears to him so abominable an outrage against the holy and loving God, that he can understand why a Redeemer is indispensable, and why he should accept the all-sufficient One whom the gospel offers. In fact, this matter of estimating sin rightly lies at the dividing-spot between truth and error, with myriads of persons. This is the starting-point toward Calvary and heaven; or it is the "stumbling-point," whence they precipitate themselves downward toward perdition.

After all, *what is sin?* It is a transgression of the law of God, and it proceeds from the heart. It lies not only in evil performances, but in evil purposes. If sin is committed against God, what does God himself say about it? He pronounces it in his Word to be "exceeding sinful,"—"the abominable thing that he hates." He compares it to a loathsome leprosy. He declares that the "wages of sin is *death*." He declares that even the "evil thoughts" which proceed from

the heart "defile a man," and that nothing that defileth shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Many passages in God's Word flash red with holy wrath against sin as the stupendous crime against the government of Jehovah.

Human history is the record of what sin has wrought from Eden to this hour. Sin gives birth to every real sorrow. Sin mingles every cup of temptation. Sin breeds every war. Sin blanches every corpse. Sin digs every grave. Sin weaves every shroud. Sin kindles the fires of future torment. As Chalmers has nervously phrased it, "the waste and the havoc of centuries that are gone, and the waste and havoc of centuries yet to come, all reverberate in one awful voice, 'Death hath passed upon all men, for *that all have sinned.*'"

The crowning evidence of the exceeding enormity of sin is seen on Calvary. What reared the cross? What wove the crown of thorns? What mingled the bitter cup which the suffering Jesus prayed "might pass

from him"? What slew the Lamb of God? Heaven, earth, and hell, all answer *sin*. On that background of infinite love — the love of Him who died for sinners — human guilt stands out with a midnight malignity of blackness!

Impenitent friend! come up to Calvary, and see yourself in the light of that wonderful scene! See what sin is doing there, what your sin deserves, and what Jesus bore there for you, the sinner. Confess there what you cannot deny, that you are rejecting Him who shed his blood for you. Confess that you are making a mock at sin, and treating it as a trifle. Confess that you are among Christ's crucifiers. And then pretend, if you dare, that you are not guilty. If those who despise Moses's law perish, "of how much sorer punishment will you be thought worthy who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and have counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing?"

That men who are guilty of such a crime against the loving Jesus should esteem it a

small and venial matter, is the strongest proof of the "deceitfulness of sin." Other arguments cluster about it; but we have no space to cite them. We might remind you of the thousand false promises sin makes, but never keeps. It promises happiness, and pays in remorse. It smiles and smiles, and "murders while it smiles." It whispers "ye shall *not* surely die," but its wages are death everlasting.

We have read of a singular tree that forcibly illustrates the deceitfulness of sin. It is called the *Judas-tree.* The blossoms appear before the leaves, and they are of brilliant crimson. The flaming beauty of the flowers attracts innumerable insects, and the wandering bee is drawn to it to gather honey. But every bee that alights upon the blossoms imbibes a fatal opiate, and drops dead from among the crimson flowers to the earth! Beneath this enticing tree the earth is strewed with the victims of its fatal fascinations. That fatal plant that attracts only to destroy is a vivid emblem of the deceitfulness and deadli-

ness of sin. For the poison of sin's bewitching flowers there is but *one remedy*. It is found in the "leaves of the tree of life," that groweth on Mount Calvary.

PAYING THE FARE.

THAT was an expensive voyage which Jonah made when he "fled from the presence of the Lord" and ran away to Tarshish. He found a ship just ready to sail, and he "*paid the fare thereof.*" But he paid dearly. How much money he paid we do not know; but it was a dead loss, for he never got to Tarshish. He paid away his credit as a servant of the Lord. He made a hard draft on his *conscience*, and that is always a dear bargain for any man. Nothing hurts us like the hurts we give to our conscience.

After Jonah's sinful voyage began, the second part, and the hardest part, of the bill came in. For the Almighty sent after him the policeman of a mighty *gale*, which caught hold of the vessel and well-nigh shivered it

into wreck. Poor Jonah had not paid his fare to the bottom of the sea; but there is no help for him. The frightened crew pitched him out into the deep, and but for God's interposing mercy he might have been devoured by the sharks instead of being preserved by that "great fish" which was sent to transport him safely to the dry land. A dear voyage that! The prophet who ran away from God lost his money, lost his time, lost his credit, lost the approval of his conscience and of his God, and would have lost his life but for a miraculous interposition. All this was the "fare" which one man paid for *sinning*.

But many of our readers may be committing the same terrible mistake. For no path seems to most people so easy and pleasant to travel, as the path of sinful inclination. It is what the Bible calls "walking in the way of a man's *own heart*, and in the sight of his *own eyes*." One man, for example, is entirely absorbed in making money. When this becomes a greedy appetite, the money-lover must pay for it with daily anxiety and worry,

and he runs the fearful risk of being eaten up with covetousness. A greed for wealth grows with years. When the rich miser of New York tottered out into the street at fourscore, and a friend asked him how he felt, the feeble old miser replied eagerly, "I feel better today: *stocks are up.*" Ah! what a *fare* that old millionnaire had to pay for travelling farther and faster than others on the road to wealth! It shrivelled up his very soul. Gold may be a useful servant, but it is a cruel master. It is not easy to own *it* without its owning us. Where one man makes it a rich blessing to others, thousands make it the ruin of their souls. Love of money drew Lot to the fertile valley of Sodom, and he "paid the fare thereof" in the destruction of his family. Love of money made Gehazi a knave: he "paid the fare" in an incurable leprosy. Love of money was one of two sins for which Judas paid with the suicide's rope, and everlasting infamy. No man can make money safely and wisely, unless he holds his earnings as a trust from God. What would it

profit you to win the wealth of an empire, if you should pay for it the price of your undying soul? "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Into no road do young persons press more eagerly than the road to sensual indulgence. No turnpike is more travelled, and none exacts a more terrible "toll." He who travels it must "pay the fare" thereof. The licentious man pays it in shame and self-loathing, in remorse and "rottenness of the bones." No young maiden can take these hot coals into her bosom without being fearfully burned. The beautiful but ill-fated girl from New Jersey, whose tragical end once awakened such a universal thrill of horror, may have taken only one false step at first. But how far that led! It requires but *one step* to go down Niagara. She paid dearly for yielding to temptation; for the end of it was death. Hundreds of young men are pressing in every night to houses of wanton pleasure, bent only on enjoyment. But over the door of every house of infamy the finger of inspiration has

written, "This house is the way to hell going down to the chambers of death."

All along the seductive pathways of self-indulgence God places his toll-gates of retribution. I sometimes pass in the streets a wretched man who often needs the help of a policeman to convey him to his desolated home. He was once rich and respected. Poor victim of the bottle, he is "paying the toll" on the devil's turnpike. The heartless dramsellers, who furnish him the poison for guilty gain, will have to pay *theirs* when they reach the judgment-bar of God!

We cannot stop to recount all the penalties which men and women have to pay for sinning. The costliest thing in the world is *sin*. It costs purity of conscience, and costs the favor of God. It will cost at the last the loss of heaven. The sin of grieving the Holy Ghost has cost many a one everlasting perdition.

"Show me the better way,—show me the safe way," exclaim some of my readers who are alarmed at their own course of sin, and

who really desire to live a better life. "Show me the way, and tell me what is *the fare thereof*." Friend, salvation is *free* on God's side; but on *your* side it must be won by repentance and faith. As far as Christ's precious atonement is concerned,

> "Nothing, either great or small,
> Remains for you to do;
> Jesus died and paid it all—
> All the debt you owe!"

But the road to heaven, which the crucified Jesus has opened to you, can only be entered by your abandoning of your sins, and following him in faith and self-denial. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Except a man take up his cross and follow Christ, he cannot be his disciple." Friend, this "fare" you must "pay" to enter heaven. Are you willing?

TO JESUS — AT ONCE.

AT a certain prayer-meeting a friend of ours arose, and gave the narrative of his first year's experience as a Christian. He had *tried* the religion of Jesus for himself; and the more he followed the Saviour, the more of delight he found in the service. If those who sneer at practical religion would only seek it for themselves, and make a fair trial of it, their lips would be sealed to scoffs, and only opened in grateful praise. I never heard of a sincere Christian who pronounced Christianity an imposture or a failure. Have you?

Our friend told us of his conversion. It was very sudden, yet none the less genuine for that. No conversion could be more sudden than that of Saul of Tarsus; but the jailer's at Philippi, and the eunuch's on the road to

Gaza, seem to have been quite as much so. In fact, the Bible descriptions of regeneration are generally alike in two particulars: there is a powerful drawing of the soul by the Holy Spirit, and there is an immediate turning from sin to the Divine Redeemer. It was so with my friend. He told us that he was at church on a certain Sabbath evening, and the command of Christ to Andrew, "*follow me*," came into his mind with prodigious power. He at once resolved to follow Jesus, and ever since that time has been an earnest, working Christian. He had no protracted season of distress before he was willing to accept the Saviour. But he commenced the practical duties of the Christian life *at once*, and sought to "do the work of to-day, with to-day's light, and help from the Lord."

This was a very brief and business-like statement of a great religious revolution in a human soul. It furnishes a model for every unconverted sinner, with whom the Spirit of God is striving. That loving Spirit may now be striving with you, my reader. If you have

felt, or do feel, an inward compunction over your life of sin, and a yearning after a better life, then is the Divine Spirit at work upon your conscience. Do not wait for the Spirit: he is already with you. Yield to him; pray for his deeper power and renewing grace. Do not wait for a more vivid sense of guilt: men find out more of their own wickedness after they have come to Jesus than they ever dreamed of before. Do not wait for more feeling of any description. If you had fallen from a ferry-boat into yonder river, with its floating ice, would you wait to *feel any colder* before you seized the rope flung to you from the vessel's deck?

Christ has waited long enough — too long — for you already. Accept him at once! When the leper came to him for healing, the Master bade him "go shew himself to the priest," and report himself cured. The suffering creature did not stop to count his loathsome "scabs," or to pull off a single "scale" from his frightful face. He asked no questions either, but set off at once as directed;

and we read that "*as he went* he was healed.' The path of obedience was the path of his salvation. When Christ found Andrew and James and John on the lake-shore of Galilee, he said to them, "Follow me." They obeyed the authoritative call, and straightway followed him. He did not come twice after them, nor did he need to speak twice to them. They forsook their nets, their homes, their kindred, and entered at once upon a career of self-denying toil, which gradually grew into the mightiest mission for God and humanity that was ever intrusted to mortal hands and hearts. Just imagine that those men had said *no*, instead of *yes*.

But they did not even sit down to weep over their sins, or stop to chaffer with the Saviour about the profits of the trade they were abandoning. The gripe of that command, "Follow me," was like the gripe of a hand of steel clothed in velvet: it was soft, but strong. They rose up, quit their nets, and set off immediately on a march of toil and humiliation, which led to martyrdom on

earth, and to a crown of unfading glory in the presence of God and the holy angels.

You, too, must forsake your "net." It is your favorite sin. Perhaps many a sin; but often a single besetting sin is a "net" that entangles a soul in its meshes, and unless that net is forsaken the soul cannot follow the Master. What is your net? God knows; and so do you. Perhaps others have seen your hindrance in a sparkling glass which fashion or appetite keeps on your table. Break that glass, or it may break your heart in the world of woe. We have seen more awakened sinners drawn back to impenitence through the stress of sensual temptation than by any other device of the devil. The decanter, the card-table, and the play-house are damning more souls to-day than all the infidelity on the globe.

Perhaps your "net" is a complicity with dishonest dealing. You may be making money against the protest of conscience. Perhaps you are held back by fear of your associates; you seek to live on good terms with sinners,

and to die on good terms with God. This cannot be done. He who takes up no cross shall wear no crown. But suppose that some irreligious friend does stare at you, or sneer; it may be that some other one may be startled out of his thoughtlessness by your fearless standing up for Jesus, and you may save a soul unawares. Do right, and leave consequences to God.

We cannot specify all the "nets" of favorite sins, or indulged cavils and doubts, which our thousands of readers may be clinging to; no matter what the hindrance, so that it keeps you from Christ. A man may be crushed by an avalanche, or poisoned by an atom of strychnine: each one *takes life!* And the sin that keeps you from Jesus takes your life for all eternity.

The only true repentance is an abandonment of known sin. The only true faith is the entire yielding of the soul to Jesus for salvation. The two make up evangelical conversion. And sincere *coming to Jesus* embraces the two. This vital step may be

attended with poignant distress of mind, or it may not. This will depend on your temperament and on the methods of the Holy Spirit's work. Do not be anxious about the degree of your distress. Tears do not save: Christ does. Wait for nothing. Wait for no one. Just begin to serve Jesus in the first duty that comes to your hand. Just refuse to do the first wrong thing to which you are tempted. Do this in prayer for divine help. You will get no help and no comfort while you remain with your "nets:" *hasten to Jesus, and at once!*

"SIN NO MORE!"

CHRIST did not excuse her sin. He did not defend or palliate it when he refused to decide that she should be stoned to death on the spot; especially by such a gang of guilty sharpers as the scribes and Pharisees who had dragged her into his presence. He set before the already convicted adulteress the one clear, practical duty,—*reformation.* This displayed the highest wisdom and the highest love. The woman had wandered away from the right; now let her come back to it. She had sinned against the purity of her womanhood; now let her stop her evil courses, and sin no more.

My object in this chapter is to press upon every unconverted person this one precise duty,—*reformation.* These are times of revival in many of our congregations, and many

are inquiring, "What shall I do to be saved?" Come to Jesus, is, of course, the first answer to this vital question. But can an awakened sinner come to Jesus with any hope of being forgiven and renewed while he is wickedly clinging to his besetting sins? No! *Repentance* is as essential as faith in order to salvation. Repentance is not merely sorrow for past sins: it is abandonment of present sins. It is the abandonment of our own specific sins.

This wretched woman of the story had been guilty of a distinct transgression. She had trodden one dark and damnable path until it brought her up against the holy sin-hating Son of God. He does not crush her with curses. He just points out to her the *other* path, — the better path, the brighter path of reformation. "Go, and sin no more." Quit this life of sin. Our Lord did not teach any visionary doctrine of "perfectionism." He did not command her to become a faultless angel; but he did command her to become a better woman. As she had stained

her soul and her life by abominable practices, the all-wise Jesus exhorts her to abandon them. This was to be the proof of her repentance; this her guide to a better life.

Before my unconverted reader I hold up these inspiring, hope-kindling words,—*faith in Jesus* and *reformation.* Your conscience condemns you. The Spirit of God is striving with you. You often say to yourself, "Would that I were a better man, or a better woman! I am not fit to die. I am not fit to live. I am guilty before God." Your past is irreparable. You cannot live that over again. It is gone, with all its guilty record, into the "books of remembrance." But you can save your future; you can save the present. There is a door of hope set before you by the loving Jesus. It is the door of repentance and reformation.

Stop and change! Don't excuse yourself by saying that a change of heart requires God's aid. It does; but he offers and promises his aid, and he offers it to you as a *free agent.* You are an intelligent, accountable

being, with the power of choice. "Stop sinning!" said Christ to the adulteress. Stop sinning! "*What* sin?" you inquire, perhaps. We answer: *Your* sin, — the sin you committed yesterday, and the sin you are committing to-day.

You may be owing an old debt, or indulging an old and wicked enmity. Go at once and pay the one, and settle the other by asking forgiveness. The refusal to pay a just debt which you can pay, or to love one whom you maliciously hate, are sins against God; and while you harbor them, your repentance cannot be genuine. You never will be saved "*by* works;" but let me tell you most plainly that you never will be saved *without* works. You must "keep the commandments," or the love of Christ cannot be within you. Christ's command to you is to forsake your sins.

Perhaps you are profane. Then stop swearing. You have been "damning" long enough. God may take you at your word, and damn you for ever. Wash your soiled lips with prayer, and swear no more.

More than one whom I know is kept from Christ by too much familiarity with the decanter. He *loves* his glass. The moment a man begins to love the stimulating cup, and to hanker for it, he is in danger. I can name scores of my acquaintances whose chief hindrance is their slavery to the bottle. Is that your hindrance? Then you must give up your bottle, or give up your soul. Implore God's help, and sin no more. The Saviour is *testing* you, just as he tested the young ruler whom he commanded to sell his possessions and "come and follow me." If you are unwilling to deny yourself in the indulgence of a favorite vice, you cannot be Christ's disciple.

The atoning Saviour has opened a door of salvation to the guilty. There is room for every sincere seeker. But there is no room for the sinner's sins. There is no room for self-righteousness. Those "filthy rags" must be flung away if you would enter. There is no room for covetousness. If you love gold more than Jesus, you cannot enter. Every sinful practice is *contraband* at the gate.

You cannot smuggle in a besetting sin. Here probably is the core of your difficulty. Many an awakened sinner has failed to be converted simply because he clung to some one or more favorite sins which God commanded him to give up.

One of my neighbors went home lately convicted of the sin of ingratitude to God. He had led a prayerless, thankless life. He went down on his knees and asked forgiveness. He began to pray with his family. He confessed his sins at his household altar. He not only made his Christian wife happy, but has become a happy man himself. God has given him a new heart; but the man asked for it.

Friend, if you are still living a prayerless, godless life, you are in fearful peril. You are presuming on God's forbearance. Your Maker has "let you alone" for a long time, though a barren fig-tree. You are sinning against wondrous love. You are sinning against a noonday light of truth. You are sinning against the Redeemer's compassion.

You are trampling his cross under foot. This sin of hardened impenitence will cost you your soul. Go straightway to the forgiving Jesus, whose "blood cleanseth from all sin," and determine that with his help you will *sin no more.*

HYMNS OF HOMAGE TO CHRIST.

THERE are many popular hymns whose key-note is an ascription of heart-loyalty to Jesus Christ. Among these, two are especial favorites; yet so little is generally known of their authorship and their history that we propose to write what we have been able to gather in regard to them.

The first of these hymns is one which always stirs us like the sound of a trumpet. Everybody knows the words, and everybody is familiar with the tune of "Coronation," to which it is wedded. If a man like George H. Stuart or D. L. Moody were called upon to lead a vast miscellaneous meeting of Christians, probably the first hymn which they would choose to "fire the heart" of the meeting would be those well-known lines, —

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all!"

As published in our American collections, this joyous and inspiring hymn contains only five verses. But the original version — now preserved in the British Museum — contains eight stanzas, of which the last one is as follows: —

"Let every tribe and every tongue,
That bound creation's call,
Now shout in universal song,
And crown Him Lord of all!"

Of this stanza our ordinary version retains but one line. The whole hymn has been most ruthlessly tinkered by the tribe of hymn-menders; but, not content with patching the sacred song itself, they have plundered it of its rightful authorship. It was often attributed to Rowland Hill, with whom it was a great favorite. In most of our books it is attributed to one "Duncan." But the real author was the *Rev. Edward Perronet*, a zealous minister of Jesus Christ in the ancient

county of Kent. He was a man of keen wit and indomitable courage, and broke loose from the English Established Church to become a travelling companion of Charles Wesley. He afterwards became the pastor of one of Lady Huntington's chapels in Canterbury. He must have been a kindred spirit with joyous-hearted Wesley, and we can imagine them as singing their way through southern England like old "Great Heart" and "Stand-fast" in Bunyan's allegory. Perronet published a small volume of "Occasional Verses, Moral and Social," in 1785, which is preserved in the British Museum. He wrote many verses, but only one great hymn. That was enough: the man did not live in vain who taught Christ's Church her grandest coronation-song in honor of her King. When and where Perronet was born we do not know; but he died with holy ecstasy in 1792, and went up to join in the coronation services of heaven. His last words were, "Glory to God in the height of His divinity! Glory to God in the depth of His humanity! Glory

to God in His all-sufficiency, and into His hands I commit my spirit." He left no written biography on earth; but when his soul entered the realms of bliss there must have been a "new song" of peculiar sweetness and rapture heard before the throne of God and of the Lamb.

With the song of homage to Jesus, left to us by Edward Perronet, there is worthy to be coupled another one, which is pitched to the same joyful key. It, too, was composed by a hymnist quite unknown to fame Very few persons, as they see the name of "*Medley*" attached to the list of authors in their hymn-books, are fully certain whether the word describes a man or a musical "medley" of some kind. Let it be known, then, that Samuel Medley was a man, — every inch of him, — and a rather extraordinary man too in his way. Born somewhere in England during the year 1738, he became a midshipman in the British navy, and fought bravely in several battles under some of old William Pitt's stout admirals. He was converted by reading one of

Isaac Watts's discourses. He then quit the sea and entered the army of Christ's ministers, serving in the Baptist "corps" with remarkable zeal and success. Medley preached in Liverpool for many years, attracting troops of sailors to his chapel. Sometimes he went out on mission-tours through the land, and once he was preaching in a barn on the text, "Cast down, but not destroyed." In the midst of the discourse his temporary pulpit of rough boards gave way and precipitated him upon the barn-floor. The lively sailor leaped up, and in a Beecher-ish vein of humor exclaimed, "Well, friends, you see we too are cast down, but not destroyed."

While in Liverpool the Spirit moved him to compose over two hundred hymns, which he published first on slips of paper for circulation. Many of them were sold for a ha'penny by a poor blind girl who sat on the church-steps, and thus earned her daily bread. But that poor sightless child had some rare treasures in her pile of "broad-sheets." For among them was that glowing lyric, —

"Oh could I speak the matchless worth,
Oh could I sound the glories forth,
That in my Saviour shine, —
I'd soar and touch the heavenly strings,
And vie with Gabriel while he sings
In notes almost divine!"

In that collection was also the hymn, "Dearest of names, my Lord and King." But the choicest treasure in the poor blind girl's pile of handbills was the one on which was printed that dear old hymn, which has been sung in ten thousand revival meetings, —

"Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me;
His loving kindness, oh, how free!"

In this jubilant song there were originally nine verses: the last one has been dropped out of our collections, and I therefore insert it here: —

"There with their golden harps I'll join,
And with their anthems mingle mine,
And loudly sound on every chord
The loving kindness of my Lord."

Æsthetically considered, this is not a remarkable bit of poetry; but, for a popular

outburst of loyal love to the Redeemer, it is unsurpassed. The common people sing it gladly. It will be chanted through tears of joy when many a massive epic is forgotten. It bears the odors of paradise.

Samuel Medley, like Perronet, went home to glory, shouting. On his dying-bed he seemed to be watching the points of a compass, and kept saying, "One point more; two points more; now only one point more." Then he shouted out, "How sweet will be the port after the storm! Dying is sweet work! Home, home, hallelujah! glory, *home, home!*" And so the glorious old mariner passed in, with all sails set, to the "desired haven."

GIVING UP — FOR CHRIST.

A FRIEND requested me to name a few simple and practical rules for Christian self-denial. "It is not what a man takes up, but what he *gives up*, that makes him rich towards God." Now what ought a follower of Jesus to give up for his Master's sake?

1. Of course every man who would become a Christ's man must renounce every thing that God's Word and a healthy conscience set down as wrong. All sins are "contraband" at the gateway of entrance to the Christian life. The sentinel at the gate challenges us with the command, — "Lay down that sin!" "Cease to do evil" comes before "Learn to do well."

2. We must give up whatever by its direct influence tends to injure ourselves or others. Here comes in the law of brotherly love, — the

law of avoiding the appearance of evil, and of renouncing whatever causes our brother to stumble. This is the generally accepted basis for the duty of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks. They endanger my neighbor A——, and they are destroying my brother B——; therefore I ought to avoid setting the example of their use before A—— and B——. Total abstinence then rests on the double ground of self-preservation, and of self-denial for the sake of others. We have a very poor opinion of the piety of any man who will not give up his bottle of wine or any other self-indulgence for the sake of taking a stumbling-block out of a fellow-creature's path.

This second principle of abandoning every practice which may mislead others is the one to be applied by a Christian whenever he is solicited to play whist, or to attend the opera, the circus, or the dancing-party. You may not become a gambler, but cards make gamblers of others. You may not be corrupted by the opera-stage, or the promiscuous dance;

but their influence has damaged thousands of your fellow Christians. The *safe* side of all questionable amusements is the *outside.*

3. Give up whatever tends to pamper the passions, or to kindle unholy desires. Paul's noble determination to "keep his body under" implies that there was something or other in Paul's fleshly nature which ought to be kept under. It is also true of about every Christian, that somewhere in his nature lies a weak point, a besetting tendency to sin; and right there must be applied the check-rein of self-denial. Even eminent Christians have had to wage constant battle with sexual passions. Others have had sore conflict with irritable, violent tempers. Old Dr. Alexander used to say to us students, "Young brethren, *envy* is a besetting sin with the ministry: you must keep that abominable spirit under." When a servant of Christ is willing to take a back seat, or to yield the pre-eminence to others, he is making a surrender which is well pleasing to his meek and lowly Master. One of the hardest things to many a Christian

is to serve his Saviour as a "private," when his pride tells him that he ought to wear a "shoulder-strap" in Christ's army.

4. Another very hard thing for most persons to give up is to give up *having their own way*. But the very essence of true spiritual obedience lies just here. It is right here that self-sufficiency and vanity and waywardness and obstinacy are to be met. Here they must be sacrificed to that demand of the Master, that He shall rule and not we. Only a truly self-denying, self-abnegating disciple can adopt those words which the holy-minded Dr. Skinner lined off to his brethren just before his death: —

> "My Jesus, as *thou* wilt!
> Oh, may thy will be mine!
> Into thy hand of love
> I would my all resign!"

5. The last rule of giving up which we have room for is that time, ease, and money must all be held tributary to Christ. In these days of stylish equipage and social extravagance, how few Christians are willing to give

up to Jesus the key to their purses and bank-safes! Too many go through the solemn farce of writing "Holiness to the Lord" on their property, and then using it for their own gratification. Every servant of Christ should systematically bestow at least one tenth of his annual income in Christian charities, and as much more as he or she can afford without robbing others. What child of God was ever bankrupted by benevolence?

It is harder to give up ease than money. Personal exertion to save sinners, to do disagreeable duties, and to "keep at it" in up-hill work, is one of the severest tests of self-denying godliness. Blessed is that disciple who can say, "It is my meat to do my Master's will, and to finish the work which he gave me to do." He goes on giving up — and giving up for Christ until his dying hour; and then when he gets to heaven he will find that what he "lost for Christ's sake" has been saving up for him, to be his everlasting treasure in glory.

THE GRACE THAT PINCHES.

THE prevailing sin of the day is *self-indulgence.* It is eating like a canker into the life of many of our churches. It leaves Christ's ministers to address empty pews on unpleasant Sabbaths. It robs Christ's treasury to keep up a showy "turn out." If it hangs a bough of profession over on the *church*-side of the dividing wall, yet its roots are deep down in the soil of the world. It is often ready to deny Christ — but seldom ready to deny itself.

The most unpopular doctrine to preach in these times, and the hardest one to practise, is the old-fashioned apostolic doctrine of *self-denial.* This is the grace that pinches. The daily battle of Christian principle is with that artful, subtle, greedy sinner, *self.* And the

highest victory of our religion is to follow Jesus over the rugged path of self-denial. This is mainly to be done in the little every-day acts of life. The great occasions that demand sublime sacrifice are few and rare.

The Christian who suppresses a jest or a witticism because it would burlesque his religion practises self-denial. When he speaks out a bold but unpopular word for the right, — in "fashionable society," — he is really taking up a cross for his Master. All genuine acts of philanthropy are born of the noble principle to deny self, and to honor Christ in the persons of those for whom Christ suffered.

The mission-school teacher, who sallies off in the driving storm to carry his gospel-loaf to a group of hungry children, is an example of this. "Why should I sit by the warm fire on my sofa to-day? Christ will look for me among my class." The seamstress who drops her hard-earned dollar into the missionary collection is really enthroning her Saviour above herself. Those educated Northern girls who went South to teach ragged freedmen

their alphabet and the Bible are truer ladies in God's sight than all the self-pampering belles, who air their fineries on Fifth Avenue.

We cannot emphasize too strongly this grace which pinches selfishness. I care not how orthodox is a man's creed, or how eloquent may be his prayers in public, if he has never learned to say "*no*" to the demands of fashion, and pride, and luxury, he is but a sorry specimen of the Christ-man.

What a touching lesson of self-denial we behold in every crutch and in every "empty sleeve" of those heroes in blue whom we yet meet on all our public thoroughfares! These noble men counted not their limbs dear, if only the nation might be saved, and freedom might triumph. Yet there are thousands of professed Christians who are unwilling to deny themselves the paltry gratification of a glass of wine or ale in order to help the sentiment of total abstinence to become popular, or to aid in saving the "weak brother who stumbleth." They know they are setting a bad example when they use or offer the

poison-cup. They know that they are throwing their influence on the side of the tipplers. Yet because it is "genteel" to partake of wine or punch, they do not hesitate to "take a drop" in the social circle. Perhaps they thrust the decanter before some weak, temptable friend, to his everlasting damnation! If the drunkard shall "not inherit the kingdom of heaven," what right has a professed Christian to ask to be admitted to heaven if *he has helped to make* a drunkard of his neighbor? I fear that God will say to the "pious" tempter, — "That man's blood will I require at thy hands." Paul acted with a truer spirit of Christ when he uttered the noble precept, "It is good *not* to drink wine whereby my brother stumbleth."

Brethren! Let us pray for the *grace that pinches.* If it "goes against the grain," all the better. If it wounds our pride, so much the better. If it makes us look "singular," let us remember that we are commanded to be a "*peculiar* people," and not to look like the votaries of Satan. Brave old Dr. Wisner —

who went home the other day to glory — was once the most *singular* man in the village of Ithaca. He dared to stand alone. He was ever ready to testify on the Lord's side, on which he had planted himself so valiantly.

Oh for a new baptism of self-denial! Oh for a new training in that lesson which our dying Master taught us, — which apostles and martyrs echoed from the prison cells, and kindled stakes, — the sublime lesson that —

"Not to ourselves alone,
Not to the flesh we'll live,
Not to the world henceforth shall we
Our strength and being give!

No longer be our life
A selfish thing, or vain:
For us, even here, to live be Christ;
For us to die is gain!"

THE RICH SOUL.

"Rich toward God." — Luke xii. 21.

"WHAT is he worth?" Used in its full significance, this would be the most pregnant, the most just, and the most comprehensive question that could be propounded in regard to any immortal being. When asked in the ordinary way, it simply means, How large are his estates? how much gold has he in his bank-vaults? And the ordinary answer would be, "The man is worth twenty thousand, or a hundred thousand dollars." Then we can only say that he will have twenty thousand or a hundred thousand dollars to account for at the bar of God. Then will he be either the happy reaper of immortal joys when every well-employed coin shall nod like a golden ear in the full sheaf of his heavenly harvest; or else he must meet thousands of scorpions to

torment his soul through his dreary eternity of despair. Is a man worth uncounted thousands in bullion or bank stock, in real estate or rare commodities? Then he ought to be worth a vast deal to the community in which he lives, and to the Church of Jesus Christ. He ought to be worth — bread to the hungry, schooling to the ignorant, Bibles to the unevangelized, and mission schools to the heathen children at our doors. He ought to be rich towards God in the large and liberal employment of his high stewardship.

For not every rich man is "rich toward God." Else our Saviour would not have uttered the parable from which our text is taken. He probably had in his mind just such a person as I could easily find in a ten minutes' walk through this commercial city, — a self-complacent Crœsus, shrivelled in soul, but corpulent in purse; a man in whom avarice has devoured all the other appetites of the heart, as voracious sharks gulp down whole shoals of smaller fish; one who could call up his immortal part, and address it in

the same spirit in which he would talk to a silken-haired pet spaniel, "Now, my little soul, thou hast much goods laid up for thyself!" Not for others, observe. Not for God. But for *thyself*. "Now eat, drink, and be merry. Satiate thyself. Feast thy eyes on full barns, full board, full bags, full bank-vaults. Gloat over them. They are all thine. Never will I be so weak-headed as to be cheated out of them, — never so weak-hearted as to squander them on foolish charities." "*Thou fool!*" thunders the voice of God above him, — "thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

This terrible satire of divine indignation is not expended upon the subject of this parable, because he was rich in earthly goods. The Bible has no controversy with men of wealth. It never discourages the acquisition of gold, as long as the heart owns the gold, and the gold does not own the heart. The anathema of the parable is not against riches, but against *self-*

ishness, the mammon-worship which dethrones Jehovah. And by as much as this selfishness is the selfishness of wealth, by just so much is it the more abominable and hateful. For when God makes an individual worth tens of thousands, and he makes himself worth less than nothing to his Creator and his fellow-men, God will curse such selfishness with the most crushing condemnation. Even at the bar of final judgment, one test-question will be, in regard to you and to me, and to every man, "How much is he worth, — worth to his Saviour and the Saviour's cause? How much has he been worth to his fellow-men?" In that great day of decision I should like to stand up as the pastor of a rich church, — exceeding rich in faith and good works. If so, you must begin now, with a holy covetousness, to lay up spiritual and eternal treasures. Let me point out to you a few simple rules for becoming "rich toward God."

I. And, first, let me remind you that *every soul on earth is born poor.* There is no

exemption from this hard lot. Whether in royal nurseries, where the heir to the throne is well-nigh smothered in down, or in the pauper's thatched hovel, every immortal soul begins its existence poor. Sin spares not a solitary child of Adam. Sin writes its moral poverty on every occupant of every cradle. As the emptiness of the purse makes one poor financially, so the entire emptiness of the heart as to all holy emotions, holy desires, and purposes, constitutes our native moral poverty. Who would go to the ragged urchin in the Industrial School for a loan? Yet it would be quite as wise to expect a depraved heart to give forth what it has never yet possessed, — one pure, holy emotion.

How then can any soul become rich toward God? He does not inherit spiritual wealth, but rather the entire and most pitiable want of it. He inherits guilt. He inherits evil passions. Noble faculties and capacities are his inheritance, but not one particle of native grace comes with them. The more gifted in intellect, the more dangerous will he become,

if those mental powers are wholly uncontrolled by the law of God. Without grace, he is a guilty creature on earth and a lost creature through eternity.

He must begin then on that grace, — on God's free gift to him through Christ. Just as a liberal father establishes his son in commercial business by furnishing him a certain sum as his capital, so (if we may thus speak) our heavenly Father gives the new heart as a Christian capital. This is the starting-point. As soon as converting grace enters the soul its condition changes. At that moment, by that act, the seeking sinner becomes the forgiven, the accepted, the adopted heir of God. And the religious principle then implanted by the Holy Ghost is the spiritual capital with which the new-made heir begins his stewardship. Sometimes this capital is furnished in childhood or in early youth, and then a long "threescore and ten" witnesses the growth of that soul into vast possessions. Sometimes a person begins late in life; and then, like those who mistake their secular callings

and only get hold of the right occupation at forty, he seldom becomes a spiritual millionnaire. In fact, he does not get far beyond his original capital. It is hard work to make a "first-class" Christian out of an aged sinner. Old habits of sin have become inveterate. The best soil of the heart has been worn out in growing enormous crops of tares. There is a want of spring and pliability in an old man's temperament; he does not readily adapt himself to new positions and new duties. As the merchants who have accumulated the most gigantic fortunes are commonly those who began to be rich before thirty, so the richest Christians are usually to be found among the converts of the Bible-class room and the Sabbath school. Begin young, my friends, if you would attain to great riches. Those who are no longer young may still be saved if they will come heartily to Jesus; but I doubt if they often do much towards saving others. God reserves the highest reward to those who enlist the earliest, and serve the hardest and the longest.

II. In the second place, let me remind you that *he who would amass large wealth must not sit down content with his original capital.* He makes investments. He plants his gold in a well-tilled farm, or sends it seaward in strong-bottomed ships, or sets it to spinning new fortunes in the factory. He must venture what he has, if he would gain more.

Even so in the spiritual world that professor is but a lean, poverty-stricken starveling, who never gets beyond the infantile condition in which he stood for the first time at Christ's table. Such professors there be in every church. Their single talent is hidden in a napkin, — a very small napkin. What God bestowed upon them at the time of conversion is all that they have now: if there has been any change, it has been rather a reduction than a growth. Such began small, — they continue smaller. They never were any thing but rivulets, trickling with slender thread of water among the barren stones, at the mercy of every August drought, and well-nigh drunk up by every thirsty noonday sun. Year after

year they trickle — trickle — trickle — until death dries them up, and nobody misses them. They watered nothing; they refreshed nobody, and blessed no living thing. Earth is little the poorer for losing them; heaven scarcely the richer for gaining them.

But a growing believer's course is like yonder river's, — its birth-place some secluded fountain under the mossy rock. Cool and clear, it steers its modest path whithersoever God shall lead it, laughing evermore and leaping to its own silvery music. For long we lose sight of it. Then we meet it again, no longer a wayside brook, but a deep-voiced river beating against its banks, — swelling up to kiss the marge of green meadows, — winding around the highland's base, — rolling on its majestic march until it spreads out into a hospitable bay, on whose placid bosom fleets ride at anchor, and in whose azure depths the banners of all nations are mirrored. Such is the onflow of a rich soul, — every day widening in influence, every day deepening in experience, every day running purer and

purer. To human eyes such believers may move more slowly as old age draws on. But it is because the volume of their graces is increasing, and they are nearing the ocean of eternity. How these lives gladden the regions through which they pass! How they mirror back the glory of Christ's gracious handiwork! How they bear up human hopes, and spread themselves out like broad, patient rivers, to carry all burthens that are launched on their bosoms!

Yet such a glorious Christian career, so beautiful in its daily flow, and so beneficent in its results, is only the original grace of conversion employed at compound interest. This mighty river of holy influence is only the original fountain magnified. Behold the virtue of *accumulation!* To this the apostle exhorted when he urged his brethren to "*grow* in grace." To accumulate soul-wealth for God is the purport of that apostolic injunction,—"*Add* to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to

patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." Brethren, I repeat and re-enforce the exhortation: Grow in grace. Expand. Absorb every down-pouring of heavenly influence. Catch every descending drop of spiritual blessing. Open your hearts to every stream of Bible knowledge. Be filled with the fulness of Christ. So shall ye be neither empty nor unfruitful, but "always abounding in the work of the Lord."

III. This leads me, in the third place, to speak of the METHODS of spiritual wealth-getting. How shall a believer become "rich toward God"? We answer that the rules for securing success in secular affairs will apply to the advancement of the soul in grace. The real currency in commerce is metallic, the broad earth over. And the gold and silver which make up the basis of personal wealth are the product of the mines; each glittering coin the result of the miner's hard toil with sieve or with mattock. Now, the currency of

God's kingdom is *truth;* and the Bible is the ore-bed. To every one of you this mine is open. He must be a blind or a careless miner who does not come out of this inexhaustible ore-bed with some new and massive "nugget" as the result of every hour's research. Do you consider every bank solvent, whose vaults are the hiding-place of solid bullion, amply sufficient to meet its liabilities? So is he a solvent Christian whose secret soul is stored with gospel principles, all coined and stamped for daily use. Nor should any Christian ask credit any further than he can fully redeem his promises and professions by the "ready money" of consistent godly conduct.

To make a rich believer, something more than faith is needed. More, too, than scriptural knowledge. There must be also — *experience.* Ah, this is a costly possession! Nothing is bought so dear; and yet it is worth all it costs us. This is a part of the soul's wealth that no one can purchase for us; no dearest friend can make it over to us as a gift. We must "go and buy for ourselves," and exorbitant is the price we often pay for it.

There are sometimes rare and beautiful wares brought into the market that are invoiced at almost fabulous rates. Ignorant people wonder why they are priced so high. The simple reason is that they cost so much to procure. That luxurious article labelled £200 was procured by the adventurous hunter, who, at the hazard of his neck, brought down the wild mountain-goat, out of whose glossy hair the fabric was wrought. Yonder pearl that flashes on the brow of the bride is precious, because it was rescued from the great deep at the risk of the pearl-fisher's life, as he was lifted into the boat half dead, with the blood gushing from his nostrils. Yonder ermine, flung so carelessly over the proud beauty's shoulder, cost terrible battles with Polar ice and hurricane. All choicest things are reckoned the dearest. So is it, too, in Heaven's inventories. The universe of God has never witnessed aught to be reckoned in comparison with the redemption of a guilty world. That mighty ransom no such contemptible things as silver and gold could pro-

cure. Only by one price could the Church of God be redeemed from hell, and that the precious blood of the Lamb, — the Lamb without blemish or spot, — the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

And so is it that the best part of a Christian character is that which was procured at the sorest cost. Patience is a beautiful trait, but it is not worn oftenest by those who walk on life's sunny side in silver slippers. It is the product of dark nights of tempest, and of those days of adversity whose high noon is but a midnight. For "the *trial* of your faith worketh patience." Purity of soul is like purity in gold, where the hottest fires turn out the most refined and precious metals from the crucible. Joseph found his crucible in an Egyptian prison; but he came out thence with the soul of a virgin. Purity of character is often bought in this wicked city by the bitter price of a crust of bread eaten with a good conscience in an attic; when a guilty connivance would have been rewarded with French satins and a harlot's sumptuous couch.

The knowledge of our own besetting sins is a knowledge we all crave. We imagine that we would be willing to pay liberally for the insight into our own hearts which shall reveal all our weak points, not knowing how soon some unexpected emergency might develop some foible or some vice of character hitherto unsuspected. But men have paid dearly for such discoveries. David paid for his self-knowledge with the life of a darling child and a broken heart; Hezekiah paid for his by the wearisome sufferings of a sick-chamber; Peter for his by the bitter agonies in Pilate's garden. But the discoveries were worth all they cost. Among God's jewels, there is no brilliant which flashes with such lustre as the tear of true penitence. Yet God only knoweth what heart-pressure, as in a vice, — what wringings and rendings of soul, what crushings of pride, and wrestlings of agony, — may have been needful in order to press out that jewel-drop upon the cheek of the stubborn sufferer! We have sometimes met with a person in social circles, who possessed a peculiar gentleness

and docility of character. As we came to know her better, we were amazed and charmed by her calm self-poise, and her heroic submissiveness to God under sudden shocks of calamity. We admired so beautiful a character. We envied its possessor. We coveted such a spirit for ourselves. Ah, we little knew at what fearful price of severe chastisements and bitter disappointments, of hopes desolated and expectations crossed, of faith put to the rack, and patience burned bright in seven-times-heated furnaces, all that meek loveliness of character had been gained! So true is it, dear brethren, that he is the most rich toward God who is ready to toil the hardest, and to bear the most to gain his acquisition.

To be truly rich, all these graces of patience and purity and meekness and long-suffering are indispensable. Cost what they will, they must be attained. By prayer and by practice they must be sought after, and so sought as to secure them. He is a meagre, crude, unfinished, unripe, and unimpressive Christian who does not possess those peculiar

graces which are only to be won by suffering and trial. Do not draw back from the possession of any spiritual treasure, I beseech you, from the dread of paying dearly for it. The worldling withholds no toil, no sacrifices that are needful to secure his coveted gains or honors. The merchant begrudges not the evenings spent away from his own fireside, if those extra hours over his ledgers will give but an extra dividend of profits. The sculptor counts not the long months wasted which see him with hammer and chisel pursuing the imprisoned figure which his keen eye detects within the block of Parian marble. And the children of light must carry into their service of Christ the same untiring ardor, the same zeal, and the same self-denial by which the children of the world win wealth and honor and emoluments. Oh for a holy enthusiasm! — a holy covetousness to become rich toward God!

IV. The fourth and last principle that I shall present is, that whoever would become

rich in spiritual treasure must *give away bountifully*. This is the truest paradox in Christian economy. He that saves for self only loses: he that loses for Christ's sake is sure to save. Would you grow rich toward God? Then learn to give. God loveth a cheerful giver. Nor do I limit this rule to the donation of the purse. The mere gift of gold is but a part of Christian benevolence, though by no means an unimportant part. I often wish that I were the possessor of the wealth of Henry Thornton or Amos Lawrence, provided that I had always, too, the wealth of heart-love to do good that those princely men had. But a rich *soul* can be always giving; as the noonday sun overflows his golden urn of ceaseless radiance, and is yet none the poorer in warmth and glory when a whole universe has been lighted.

We must freely give of every thing that we have freely received from the Lord. If we have the heart to pray, let us give of our prayers. No legacy that a rich father could have left me would compare in value with my

widowed mother's prayers for me at the mercy-seat. You that have acquired the wisdom which age and experience confer can give those counsels which are apples of gold in baskets of silver to the young, the inexperienced, and the unfortunate. Give your personal labors, too, for Christ. Many a rich man seeks to compound with his conscience by bestowing bank-checks in lieu of his own presence in the mission school, the prayer-meetings, or the abodes of suffering. O man of wealth! God gave thee that very leisure thou enjoyest in order to do the very work of charity which thy poorer, hard-toiling neighbor has no time to perform. Those that have not money, or counsel, or charitable deeds to bestow, can at least afford a godly example. And so a godly life may be, from first to last, all expenditure; just as the temple lamps consumed themselves away in giving light. But the life and the heart grow the fuller, the brighter, the stronger, the more they expend. What were rich-souled Christians given to the world for but to be reservoirs of blessings?

Happy is the man who can bring the very atmosphere of heaven with him whenever he approaches us! — who acts upon our spirits as the May breezes act upon the first shoots of the tulip and the violet! He is a bountiful giver. He confers on us light; he beams goodness into our souls; he teaches us patience; he showers on us brotherly kindness; he illustrates for us faith; he exhibits the true beauty of meekness; he sheds hope by his very presence, and his unflinching bravery has often been an inspiration of valor to our failing hearts. Next to Christ himself, there is no blessing to the community like a Christ-like Christian.

My dear reader, I covet for you the best gifts. Ask of God who giveth liberally that ye all be rich, — rich in faith, rich in good works, rich in revenues of joy, rich in heart holiness and the love of Jesus. And then, although your frame be wrapped in coarse raiment, your soul shall be enfolded in the shining garniture of Christ's righteousness. Though your dwelling-place be so lowly,

yet your heaven-seeking affection may be at home in the celestial courts before the throne of God and of the Lamb. Although your purse be scanty, your heart will be a palace whose chambers are filled with "all pleasant and all precious riches." So shall you be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

THE HONEST DISCIPLE.

SOME characters in the Bible are painted with a single stroke. Enoch, the stanch old patriarch who walked with God; Caleb the faithful, "who followed the Lord *fully;* Dorcas, who made the needle sacred; Onesiphorus, the model gentleman, who oft refreshed Paul and "was not ashamed of his chain;" Demas, the deserter from duty, — all these and many others owe their peculiar immortality to a mere line or two of Holy Writ.

One of these striking characters of whom we would like to know more is NATHANAEL, of Cana. The main facts that we gain about him are that he dwelt in the village where Christ turned pure water into *pure* wine; and it is possible that he was the bridegroom at that famous wedding. His name in Hebrew has the same significance with Theodore in the

Greek, — "the Gift of God." Perhaps his mother laid his name on the little head of her new-born darling in especial gratitude for a child whose coming she regarded as a special mercy. Would that we all so recognized God's hand in the bestowal of children that we could write beside each name in the family-record, "*A gift of God to my heart*, and therefore not to be given by me to the Devil!"

Every good man is God's boon to society; but this Nathanael's especial trait was downright sincerity. He was an honest man. When his friend Philip invites him to come and follow Jesus, he rather bluntly inquires, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Not merely did he mean by this that the Nazarenes were a disreputable set; but he was too close a student of the Jewish Scriptures not to know that the Messiah was predicted to make his appearance in Bethlehem of *Judea* (not in Galilee). Philip's curt and sensible reply is, "Come and see." This is the conclusive argument, after all. The only satisfactory test of Christianity is the test of personal examination and per-

sonal experiment. Come and see Jesus for yourself! Come and try him for yourself. There are some truths which, like good medicines, must be taken in order to be trusted, as well as trusted in order to be taken. Of such truths, the pre-eminent is a divine, incarnate Redeemer. Friend, if you want to know Christ's ineffable beauty, come and see him; if you want to know his pardoning love and sustaining power, come and obey him. *Do his will*, if you would know of his doctrine. I never heard of an infidel who had fairly tried the experiment of living out the religion of Christ Jesus.

Philip's request was obeyed; and when Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, he said of him, "Behold an Israelite indeed *in whom is no guile!*" It is as if he had said, Behold a man of faith and of frank sincerity. Christ does not pronounce Nathanael to be absolutely sinless. And if Nathanael had so pretended, he would not have been guileless; for if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. Nathanael was an honest

Israelite, a man of faith, a man of prayer, and above all a man above shams and false pretences. Even when Jesus pronounced him "without guile," he did not begin to stammer out any self-depreciating cant: "Lord, you give me too much credit; I don't deserve to be called an honest man. I am only a miserable sinner." Nathanael left all such lying cant to those Pharisees of modern prayer-meetings who pretend to be worse than they are, in order to get credit for humility. I believe that there are as many lies told in self-depreciation as there are in self-exaggeration. When a Christian *knows* whom he has believed, and knows that he is sincerely striving to follow Jesus, even in an imperfect fashion, he has no moral right to apply to himself, in penitential prayer, the same words which describe a sceptic, a felon, or a hypocrite. Some people have a very sneaking way of feeding their self-conceit on phrases of profound humility. Other people — and really sincere Christians — introduce many phrases of self-abasement out of mere form; just as I have

overheard giddy, frivolous girls and careless men of pleasure mumble that solemn litany, "Lord, have mercy on us, *miserable sinners!*" Had I told them the same thing to their faces, they would have grown red with wrath and resented it as an insult.

Our holy Redeemer had an intense abhorrence of hypocrisy. He denounced sanctimoniousness with a severity that startles us in One so gentle and compassionate. On no class of sinners did he thunder such terrific rebukes as on "the whited sepulchres," who looked fair on the outside, but within were full of rottenness. Christ emphasized the necessity of consistency between the faith of the heart and the practice of the life. "By their *fruits* ye shall know them." And where the renewed heart is a sweet fountain, his Word teaches us that it should not send forth bitter waters. The honest accordance of the heart that loves Christ and the life that honors Christ is what the Bible means by "godly sincerity." Those memorable words of Robertson of Brighton will bear to be quoted again.

"The first lesson in religion is, *be true;* the second lesson is, *be true;* and the third lesson still is, *be true.*" I cannot believe that growth in grace is possible to the man or woman whose daily habit is to confess a guilt they do not feel, and to profess a love for Jesus which they do not experience.

The glory of Nathanael is that he was an honest disciple. For he *was* a disciple, and one of the chosen twelve. His call to discipleship was similar to that of Andrew and Peter. He obeyed the call of Jesus, and did not go back to his "fig-tree," under which the All-seeing Eye had discovered him. In the books of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, this honest brother is mentioned by his surname or second name, *Bartholomew.* His whole name seems to have been Nathanael Bartholomew, which last word signifies "the son of Tholmai." John, however, calls him only by his beautiful "Christian name," the "Gift of God."

Philip and Nathanael Bartholomew are always spoken of together. They seemed

to have grown to each other like twins. After Christ's resurrection, Nathanael met his master on the beach of Galilee; and his hand had hold of the net when the huge draught of fishes came up to the shore. After the Ascension, Nathanael attended the prayer-meeting in the "upper room." From that hour we never hear of him again. Tradition says that he was crucified in Armenia. But, wherever he died, we never hear that he forfeited that golden name which Jesus bound about his brow: "The Israelite indeed in whom is no guile."

THE FATHER OF ENGLISH HYMNS.

ABOUT the year 1675, a worthy Deacon Watts who kept a Puritan boarding-school in Southampton, England, was locked up in prison for being an incorrigible Dissenter. It was during the reign of the second Stuart, which Macaulay has well styled "the reign of the strumpets." Before the door of the good deacon's cell, his wife used to come and sit while she sang for the comfort of her imprisoned husband, and for the quieting of her eldest born baby, which she held in her arms. The little ISAAC must have been drawing in some inspirations of his mother's music with his mother's milk. He was a poet from the cradle. His earliest thoughts he shaped into rhyme.

His mother offered a copper prize to the children in her husband's school for the best

bit of poetry they could produce; and Master Isaac, then in his eighth year, won the prize by the following saucy couplet: —

> "I write not for a farthing, but to try
> How I your farthing writers can outvie."

At fifteen the precocious lad had made choice of the "better part," and became a follower of Jesus. He worshipped at the Independent Church in Southampton, of which his father was a deacon; but the preaching edified him more than the service of song. The congregation were endeavoring to praise God every Sabbath in the clumsy, jaw-breaking measures of Sternhold and Hopkins, or the jolting rhymes of Nahum Tate. To the tuneful ear of the young student this saw-filing process in the name of sacred psalmody was utterly beyond endurance. One Sabbath morning (in 1702), after service, he vented his contempt for such ill-conditioned doggerel, and the only reply he received was, "Give us something better, then, young man!" He accepted the taunting challenge, went

home, and produced before sunset a hymn which was lined off, and sung at the evening service. It began with the verse —

> "Behold the glories of the Lamb,
> Amidst his Father's throne:
> Prepare new honors for his name,
> And songs before unknown."

The author was just eighteen years old; but on that Sabbath *our English Hymnology was born*, and young Isaac Watts was its father. Well might Montgomery say that he "was almost the inventor of hymns in our language, so greatly did he improve on his now forgotten predecessors in English sacred song." Richard Baxter had written twenty years before his beautiful —

> "Lord, it belongs not to my care,
> Whether I die or live."

But the single seed-corn did not sprout into a hymnologic harvest. Watts had struck the Meribah-rock of melody, and the waters continued to gush forth. In the year 1707 he gave to the churches an original volume,

entitled "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," and for the copyright he received the munificent sum of *fifty dollars!* If kept to this day, it would have yielded to its owners a solid million. The book of hymns was soon followed by another entitled "The Psalms of David imitated in the language of the New Testament." In this second volume appeared the famous "Old Hundredth," which began with the words —

> "Nations, attend before His throne
> With solemn fear, with sacred joy."

John Wesley altered these lines to the grander ones, —

> "Before Jehovah's awful throne,
> Ye nations, bow with sacred joy!"

This stands as the solitary instance in which hymn-tinkering has improved upon the original. The man must indeed rise early in the morning who can improve upon Isaac Watts.

That he ever composed any one sacred song which can take rank beside Toplady's "Rock of Ages" or Charles Wesley's "Jesus, Lover

of my soul," we do not claim. Those two, like the morning and the evening star, ride brightest in the firmament. But Isaac Watts wrote *more* of the great hymns of our mother tongue than any other man. No lay of Calvary has ever yet approached in pathetic grandeur that offering which Watts laid at his Redeemer's feet: —

> "When I survey the wondrous Cross
> On which the Prince of Glory died,
> My richest gain I count but loss,
> And pour contempt on all my pride."

I can imagine that the apostle Paul may have already thanked Isaac Watts in paradise for having taught the church how to sing his own immortal declaration, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!" No funeral hymns either have equalled those which issued from Watts's pensive spirit. How many of us can recall the first scenes of burial which we witnessed in our early country homes! We seem to see again the rural neighbors gathered on the grass before the door, while the sun shimmered

through the trees upon the group around the open coffin. We seem to hear again, to the sweet plaintive strains of old "China," those soul-melting words: —

"Why should we tremble to convey
This body to the tomb?
There the dear form of Jesus lay,
And left a long perfume."

It is an evidence of wondrous versatility of genius that while Watts composed lines which Daniel Webster murmured on his dying-bed ("Show pity, Lord! O Lord, forgive!"), he also wrote the most perfect child-hymns in our language. Nothing in our modern Sabbath-school collections quite equals the old dog-eared primer which contained, "How doth the little busy bee," and "Whene'er I take my walks abroad." Bradbury was good; but the vintage of Watts, nearly two hundred years old, is better still. The only child-hymn of our day, which might have come from Watts's pen, is that gem of sweet simplicity, —

"Jesus loves me, — this I know;
For the Bible tells me so:
Little ones to him belong;
I am weak, but he is strong."

The author of "Divine and Moral Songs for Children" was himself childless. He lived a bachelor under the roof of Sir Thomas Abney, in London, whom he went to visit, and lingered there as a welcome guest for thirty-five years. In 1748 he fell asleep in Jesus, leaving as his beautiful posterity seven hundred white-winged hymns. They are flying under the whole heaven. His body rests in Bunhill Fields, the Westminster Abbey of the glorious Puritans. Close by the gate, and not far from Bunyan's grave, is a plain tomb, which bears the name of Isaac Watts, *the father of the English hymn.*

BRAINS, AND HOW TO USE THEM.

(A Talk with Young Men.)

FOR what has the Creator given us our brains? Why are affluent mental gifts bestowed upon some men? And how may even moderate abilities be made most effective for the promotion of truth and the well-being of humanity? These are questions that concern young men, especially those who are placed on the highest planes of intellectual culture and influence. All men are concerned in these questions; for a great man is, perhaps, the greatest fact in the history of an age. No more decisive influence can be brought to bear upon any age, or any community, than the employment of its highest intellect for truth or for error, — for God and the right, or for the Devil's wrong. Intellect ennobled, purified, heaven-directed, is the

universal power to build up. Intellect perverted, corrupted, sin-directed, is the most terrible of agencies to pull down and destroy. "How shall I use my intellect?" is the most vital moral problem that can come before the court of your conscience.

Some men hold that talents are given for the same purpose that wealth is often inherited, — for mere personal luxury. There be intellectual millionnaires who decorate their mind, as a palace, for pride to walk through. Its superb picture-galleries, whose walls a creative imagination has clothed with visions of entrancing beauty; its saloons of receptiveness, in which stately thoughts do come and go; its costly libraries, where memory stores up its massive accumulation, shelf on shelf; its statue-lined corridors and halls, — are but the splendid realm which self has adorned by the "might of its own power, and for the honor of its own majesty." Scarcely a living being is the wiser, the better, the happier, for such mental monopolists. They stand in the midst of humanity as the marble man-

sion of a selfish Duke might stand in the midst of a poverty-cursed and squalid peasantry. While the nabob is gorging at his rosewood table, or lounging before his Murillos, the poor Lazarus without is begging crumbs for the lean and hungry brats, such as Murillo portrayed upon his canvas. One man surfeits: the others starve. There is enough for all, if it were distributed. Distribution is Heaven's law, whether the treasures be in the lordly mansion, or in the lordly mind. For God never gave to man fine intellectual powers — vigorous understanding, strong-winged imagination, cunning invention, or soul-rousing eloquence — for the owner's sole use and benefit. Talent is trust. Let no man covet it, unless there come with it wisdom from above to insure it a right direction.

One student uses his brain — as he uses his midnight lamp — merely to illuminate the page before his single eye. Another man makes his intellect a meridian sun! How bountifully does the full urn of noonday overflow! Not only on Alpine peaks, and "heart of the

Andes," kindled into pyramids of fire, but down into modest vales the sunlight falls, warming the honeysuckle o'er the cottage doorway, lifting the tiny wheat-blade from its earthly tomb; and, even when some solitary daisy is shaded beneath an overgrown tree, the generous sun wheels round and round, until before nightfall the daisy too is reached, and fills her little cup with golden light. Such full-orbed intellects there be. They turn midnight into noon. Upon the most elevated minds and the most favored classes their rays may fall the earliest; but at length the lowliest valleys of human life are warmed in the celestial influence. So rose the tent-maker of Tarsus upon a benighted age. Amid the gloom of the sixth century shone out Augustine; amid the prejudice of the fifteenth beamed Christopher Columbus. The sixteenth century came in with clouds and darkness on its awful front. God said, "Let there be light," and Luther was! When his sun departed with its trail of glory, the moral heavens beamed, in turn, with Lord Bacon, Milton,

Isaac Newton, Leibnitz, Pascal, Edwards, Chalmers, — each an overflowing orb of truth.

Have you never observed the descriptive phrase which Inspiration employs to set forth the moral benefactors of mankind? The phrase employed is the happy one of "watering," conveying the noble thought that it is the office of great intellect both to descend and to distribute.

In the torrid lands of the Orient, it was the wont of monarchs to construct vast reservoirs on the mountain-sides. These were filled by the rains of heaven. When the summer-heats had drank the gardens and the vineyards dry, the waters of the reservoir were conducted down, and forthwith the wilted vine lifted its head again, and the drooping fig-tree smiled. Green grew the pomegranate at the water's cool touch; and golden grew the barley-harvest. So, on the heights of influence, God replenishes intellectual reservoirs. He fills them from on high. He fills them to irrigate the masses below them. The truths that accumulate there will stagnate if selfishness lock

up the sluice-gates. But let it be your ambition to accumulate for others; freely receiving, freely give. Let not the curse that rests on him who hedges round his well in season of drought, or on him who locks up his granary in time of famine, rest on you, for intellectual stinginess: the meanest of misers is he who hoards a truth.

The sources of intellectual power are various. The range of employment for your mental attainments will be as various also as your several pursuits in life, — far too wide for the reach of a single hour's discussion. But there are two sources of mental power and usefulness, which are opened to every young man who has a brain to think or a heart to feel. Learning and Eloquence — getting the truth and giving the truth — are the two most attainable possessions for every healthy mind. For while the Creator has bestowed great analytical acumen as a gift comparatively rare; while the imagination, which can

> "Glance from heaven to earth,
> From earth to heaven,"

belongs to a favored few; while fertility of invention is a monopoly of genius, — yet nearly every healthy intellect can acquire truth and impart it. Young brethren, every affirmative man in your class (who is not smitten with congenital barrenness) may become measurably learned and measurably eloquent. For what is learning but storing the interior man through the five conduits of sight, touch, smell, taste, and hearing, and so storing it that every precious parcel shall be at arm's reach in the instant of need? This depends on industry, not Genius. (Unless you make Genius to be the power of doing with prodigious rapidity what other minds effect by slow and steady strain, — as the driving-wheels of a locomotive achieve the same number of revolutions in a minute that the wheel of a baggage-wagon accomplishes in an hour.)

Within the last few years England and America have laid in their honored graves two men, who were prodigies of acquirement unsurpassed. One of them lies by the side of Addison in Westminster Abbey. The

other — a namesake of Addison — lies by the side of President Edwards in the Westminster Abbey of America.* One of them, when at school, was known among his school-fellows as "Macaulay, the Omniscient." From boyhood he was a terrible toiler. He saw every thing; he heard every thing; he read every thing; he remembered every thing. It is even said that, if every copy of Milton's Paradise Lost had been committed to the flames, the whole of the matchless epic could have been recovered, line for line, from the tablets of Macaulay's memory. That Macaulay had genius none will deny; but his special power was the power of acquiring, classifying, and presenting vast arrays of truth, and so presenting them as at once to enrich the memory and captivate the understanding. He was one of the distributing reservoirs of History. He is the father and founder of a school of authorship, in which he as yet stands without an

* The Cemetery at Princeton, N. J., which contains the ashes of Jonathan Edwards, Davies, Witherspoon, Dod, Miller, the Alexanders, and many other men of sacred renown.

equal. Other men have penetrated into profounder political philosophy. Others have preserved a more rigid impartiality. But no other man has combined in himself such power of acquisition, and such power of presentation, — such exhaustless wealth of knowledge "from the royal cedar to the hyssop of the wall," — such enthusiastic conception of the grand and heroic, mingled with such detestation of what is sensual, selfish, and devilish in human history. In his own fine language it may be said of him that, "among the eminent men whose bones lie near him in the Great Abbey, none has left a more stainless, and scarcely one a more splendid name."

If Macaulay had no superiors in Britain, he certainly had one American rival in powers of acquisition and retention. His own attainments in the domain of letters and of civil history were not more remarkable than the attainments in sacred literature, in Oriental research, and in ecclesiastic history, by Joseph Addison Alexander.

As I pronounce that hallowed name, the

visions of student-days come back before me. I seem to see again that form as it once stood in the sacred desk; I seem to hear again those plaintive tones as they once melted on the air. That square, massive head (which we fancied to be like to Napoleon's) rises once more before us; the ruddy glow on the cheek a beautiful emblem of the soul-health within. From those lips we seem to hear again those streams of concinnate exegesis, those brilliant bursts of impassioned vehemence, those tides of holy emotion, — all poured forth in a voice that sometimes swelled through the vestibule to passers in the street, and sometimes hushed itself to the plaintive melody of a lute.

Such a reservoir has not been opened from any American pulpit in our generation. No man ever saw the bottom of that profound, capacious, all-containing, inexhaustible intellect. No man ever laid a task too heavy on that herculean memory. From a single reading he could commit a whole discourse; from a single perusal he rose up master of an intricate volume, — his mental recreations were

other men's arduous toils. A thousand pulpits are the richer for the accumulations of that one busy and beautiful life, — that career of labor and of love. Alas for us, that such a life should have ended! Alas for the bereaved town, the bereaved seminary and church, that never can grow reconciled to its bereavement! We go into our libraries, and behold two fatal gaps in two favorite departments of study; and we ask ourselves, "Who will ever finish yonder magnificent History since Macaulay's hand has forgot its cunning? Who will ever carry on those affluent commentaries since Addison Alexander has passed to the loftier knowledge and clearer light of the Heavenly world?"

Lest any one should be discouraged by the presentation of such prodigies of mental acquisition as the two celebrated examples just cited, let me say that they owed their eminence and usefulness to herculean industry. Young men, choose for your patron-saint Industry. Get some starling to cry work — work — work — study — study — study. Study every

thing, but with a bearing on your own line of intellectual labor. Concentrate on one point, or a few points, "as a gardener, by severe pruning, forces the sap of the tree into two or three vigorous limbs, instead of suffering it to become a sheaf of spindling twigs." Concentration is the secret of strength. "Stick to your brewery," said the great Rothschild to Mr. Buxton, "and you will be the first brewer of London. Try to be brewer, banker, manufacturer, and merchant, and you will soon be — in the gazette."

"Mr. A—— often laughs at me," said Professor Henry once in Princeton College Laboratory, — "often laughs at me, because I have but one idea. He talks about every thing, aims to excel in many things, but I have learned that, if I ever make a breach, I must play my guns continually upon one point."

This sober wisdom met its reward. He gave his days and nights to physical science. From the time when, an obscure youth, he studied Silliman's Journal by fire-light, in a log cabin, on to the day when English dukes

and earls rose up to do him respect, he had but one aim in life, — to add to the sum of human knowledge. He found the earth and air full of electricity; and he found, too, that the galvanic current, slow, but steady and continuous, was worth a thousand brilliant electric flashes. He set to work upon this, with might and main. He linked battery to battery; harnessed the subtile fluid into gigantic magnets, and made it lift prodigious burdens. And when at last, by his untiring toil, a chaos of facts was marshalled into the symmetry of a science; when, in obedience to his guidance (in common with other co-laborers), the electric current mounted the wires as a message-bearer round the globe, — then did the Genius of Truth crown Joseph Henry with the benediction, "Thou hast sought me and found me, because thou didst search for me with all the heart."

Thus much for the acquisition of knowledge, which depends upon a busy brain. It is the result of concentration and industry invincible.

Eloquence, on the other hand, which is the second source of intellectual power that I am commending to you, — eloquence is the golden product of an inspired heart. No elaboration of rhetoric, no oratorical culture, can produce it, which ignores the spontaneous emotions of an honest, fearless, loving heart.

Would you rule men from the rostrum, from the bar, or from the sacred desk? Let no devil cheat you out of your conscience; let no callous critic shame you out of your honest emotions.

For what is eloquence but truth in earnest? The mind's best words spoken in the mind's best moments.

When truth gets full possession of a man's conscience; when all his sensibilities are aroused and his sympathies in full play; when the soul becomes luminous, until the interior light and glow blaze out through every loop and crevice; when, from head to foot, the whole man becomes the beaming, burning impersonation of truth, — then is he honestly, naturally, irresistibly eloquent. To this a

great nead is not always essential: a great heart is, and must be.

David, wailing over his self-ruined darling Absalom; Paul, pleading before Felix, until the guilty man paled to the color of his marble throne; Martin Luther, stretching up to the full height of his manhood, in those words, "Here I stand, I cannot otherwise. God help me. Amen;" Patrick Henry, sounding the key-note to Bunker Hill in, "Give me liberty, or give me death!" Whitefield, depicting the perils of a lost soul on the verge of the pit, until the plumes on Duchesses' head-dresses quivered, and Chesterfield cried out, "Good God! he is gone!" Kossuth, sounding the requiem of his dead nationality; and Alexander Duff, pronouncing his sublime farewell to the heathery hills of Scotland,— these men were eloquent, not by special inspiration of the head, but by overpowering inspiration of the heart. The burning soul kindled the lips; and the baptism of eloquence came in the form of a "fiery tongue."

The loftier the emotion, observe, the more

impressive the utterance of the orator. The same law applies to eloquence that applies to hydrostatics. If the jet is to be thrown to a great height in the public fountain, the spring that feeds the fountain must have a lofty birth-place on the mountain-side. He who is false to the better instincts of his soul seldom can be eloquent. To the limber-tongued politician laboring with cunning speech to make the worse appear the better side, to the hireling pleader who barters justice for a fee, or to the hireling priest who sells souls for salary, — Nature denies to such that gift which she reserves for the leal and loyal spirit.

The grandest achievement of eloquence has been reached when the orator has received the fullest celestial baptism of love, when self has become swallowed up in the glory that surrounds the cross of Calvary.

And where should we look for the highest realizations of true eloquence, but in the pulpit? Where is there less excuse for tameness, for affectation, for heartlessness, for stupidity? Where can the strongest intellect find fuller

play? For the ambassador of truth has not only the loftiest of themes, but his text-book is the most perfect of models. In it may be found every thing that is most sublime in imagery, most melting in pathos, most irresistible in argument. The minister of Christ need not betake himself to the drama of Greece, the forum of Rome, or to the mystic retreats of German philosophy; he need not study Chatham in the Senate Chamber, or Erskine at the bar. He may ever be nurturing his soul amid those pages where John Milton fed, before those eyes, which had "failed with long watching for liberty and law," beheld the gorgeous visions of "Paradise." He may be ever amid the scenes which inspired Bunyan to his matchless dream, and taught Jeremy Taylor his hearse-like melodies. The harp of Israel's minstrel is ever in his ear; before his eye moves the magnificent panorama of the Apocalypse. He need but open his soul to that "oldest choral melody," the book of Job; if it used to inspire Charles James Fox for the Parliament-house, why not

himself for the pulpit? Paul is ever at his elbow to teach him trenchant argument; John, to teach persuasion; and a heart of steel must he have who is not moved to pathos in the chamber of heart-stricken David, or under the olive-trees of Gethsemane. The Bible is the best of models too, for it is always true to the life. It reaches up to the loftiest, down to the lowliest affairs of existence. The same divine pencil that portrayed the scenic splendors of the Revelations and the awful tragedy of Golgotha condescends to etch for us a Hebrew mother bending over her cradle of rushes, a village-maiden bringing home the gleanings of the barley-field, and a penitent woman weeping on the Saviour's feet. What God has ennobled, who shall dare to call common? What true orator of nature will fear to introduce into the pulpit a homely scene or a homespun character, a fireside incident or a death-bed agony, the familiar episodes of the field and the shop, the school-room and the nursery. He does not lower the dignity of the pulpit: he rather imparts to it the higher dignity of human nature.

Would that the pulpit, which is the most potent educator among us, would that every pulpit were thoroughly liberated, not only from a time-serving expediency that muffles its rebuking thunders, but from a contemptible petit-maitreism that curbs its free manly activities.

From the pulpit, the statesman should learn the "higher law" of justice and of right; the merchant should learn the golden rule of integrity. Before the pulpit the politician should breathe an atmosphere of such crystal purity that a descent into the Avernus of our ordinary "politics" would be instant suffocation. The patriot should find his minister more patriotic than himself; the maiden should be the purer for his delicacy; the mother should find a Christian culture made the easier for his luminous portraiture of the child-life's joys and sorrows. His every utterance should be a fresh inspiration to the artist, a fresh stimulus to the intellect of the scholar. No man should build so high, but the pulpit should build above him. No reck-

less youth in his wildest aberration of profligacy should ever reach a pitfall or a precipice that had not been mapped out to him beforehand in the pulpit. And on life's rough highway no sinning sufferer should faint or fall, or be flung into thicket so dense and dark, but over him should bend Christ's messenger of love, and into his bleeding wounds should distil the balm of Heaven's Gospel.

In all this, is there no scope for the loftiest intellect?

THE SINS OF THE TONGUE.

THE gift of speech is a marvellous gift. For five whole days of creation's first week the Almighty was clothing the new-born earth with light and verdure, and covering it with the myriads of animal life. But it was a voiceless world. At length God made man in his own image, with not only a soul to appreciate his Creator, but a *tongue* to give expression to his homage, and "as the new-formed being gazed around him, the silence was broken, and creation thrilled with the melody of speech."

Philosophers tell us that every uttered word produces a vibration in the atmosphere; an ingenious theory has therefore been broached that these vibrations never entirely cease! If this were true, we should still be moving

among the inaudible words of all our progenitors. This seems fanciful in natural philosophy; but there is a sense in which every uttered word *lives for ever*. It lives in its influence on the speaker, in its influence on others. Paul's voice echoes still; millions of God's faithful messengers, being dead, yet speak!

When Latimer was on trial for heresy, he heard the scratch of a pen behind the tapestry. In a moment he bethought himself that every word he spoke was *taken down*, and he says that he was very careful what words he uttered. Behind the veil that hides eternity is a record-book, in which our every syllable is taken down. Even the most trivial are not forgotten, for the Lord Jesus tells us that "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment!" If our words have an eternity of existence, if good words have so potent an influence to save, if idle, or profane, or poisonous speech work such perennial mischief, how needful is the perpetual utterance

of the prayer, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips!"

I. Among the many sins of the tongue are *idle words.* "Avoid foolish talking," says the wise apostle, "and let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." There is a peculiar sin in idle talking when we remember that the same expenditure of breath might be productive of so much blessing. When we contemplate a Whitefield in the full rush of his resistless oratory, — now startling a guilty sinner from his slumber on the verge of hell, now leading a bewildered wanderer to Christ, now kindling a saint into rapture, and now melting a rebel into penitence, — we grow indignant at the thought that this prerogative of speech should so often be spent in silly jests and contemptible frivolities. Are time and eternity so lacking in themes of importance that we shall spend our precious breath in fuming emptiness? Surely, if we would but reflect how soon our tongues will lie silent in the tomb, and how speedily the dust will gather upon our lips, we should

be awed into more sobriety and purity and carefulness of speech.

Shall we never jest? Does not a pleasant joke sometimes do good like a medicine? Very true. There is more marrow in a wise man's jokes than in a fool's solemn inanities. But a wise man "sets a watch on his lips" even when he utters a pleasantry. Especially, he never jests at the wrong time, or about sacred things. He never utters puns and parodies on the Bible; for what men have once laughed at, they seldom reverence. Heartily do I wish that I had never uttered a ludicrous application of a Scripture line, and had never heard one; for the profane or indecent burlesque will often shoot into my mind in the midst of a sermon or a prayer. Wit and humor are allowable when controlled by good sense and by reverence for God; but when we venture into the sublime domains of Revelation, we should put our shoes from off our feet, for the ground whereon we stand is holy. From my soul I abominate *merriment in the pulpit.* Should he court a grin who

should be winning souls to God? When an ambassador of Christ descends to make sport in the sacred desk, the devil laughs.

II. Malicious words are cousins in sin to idle and profane words. Paul says, "Let all bitterness and *evil speaking* be put away from you with all malice." Kind words are the oil that lubricates every-day intercourse. They cost little. A phrase of common comfort, "that by daily use hath almost lost its sense, will fall upon the saddened heart like choicest music." We love to meet certain people. They always have a kind, cheerful, inspiriting word for us. They make us hopeful, and heal our heart-aches. Others we instinctively shun; they always have a sly thrust at somebody; they hatch mean suspicions in our minds; they are ever letting out a drop of *acid* on some character or cause that is dear to us, and the acid leaves an ugly stain. There was an ancient malediction that the tongue of the slanderer should be cut out; if that summary process were now enforced, we fear that some of our acquaintances might soon

lose the "unruly member." A slanderer is a public enemy. One reckless tongue is enough sometimes to embroil a whole village and to set a church in a flame. "There are six things which God hates; yea, seven are an abomination unto him." The seventh of the category is "the false witness who speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

III. In treating of the sins of the tongue, we must not omit a word in regard to that feculent ichor that exudes from some lips in the form of obscenity. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; and a filthy imagination, like a fever, comes out on the tongue. In companies of youth, in shops and counting-houses, in rooms of colleges and boarding-schools, in ships' cabins and soldiers' tents, a vender of obscenities is a walking pestilence. Long years do not obliterate the filthy memories; not even the converting grace of God can wholly purify the unclean chambers of imagery.

And then there is *profane swearing*. This

is the most gratuitous and inexcusable of sins. The man who swears turns speech into a curse, and before his time rehearses the dialect of hell. He waits for no bait; but "bites at the devil's bare hook." The shrewd Quaker's advice to the profane youth, "Swear away, my young friend, till thee gets all that bad stuff *out of thee*," points to the real source of the vice; for it is out of an evil *heart* that proceed evil thoughts, false witness, and blasphemies.

We fear that the purest tongue will need much purifying before it is fit to join in the celestial praises of God's upper temple. For that worship let us attune our voices by ceaseless prayers, by words of love, by earnest vindications of the right, by habitual "speech seasoned with salt" of divine grace. The melody of heaven will spring from a *harmony of hearts;* each voice there will bear a part in the song of Moses and the Lamb.

WHO KINDLED THE FIRE?

ONE article in the Mosaic law, given from heaven, is this: "If fire break out and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn or the standing corn be consumed therewith, *he that kindled the fire* shall surely make restitution." This statute had a peculiar necessity in such a hot, dry country as Palestine, where there was a peculiar danger from accidental conflagrations. If a man burned over his stubble-field, it was necessary, before the dry grass was lighted, to see that the wind was in the right quarter, and every precaution taken that the flames should not kindle upon the property of a neighbor. If any farmer neglected to take these precautions, and the swift-footed flames went careering through vineyards, and orchards, and stacks of barley,

then he who kindled the fire was required to pay for the damage produced by his own carelessness.

The sound principle that underlies this law is that men must suffer for the evil they do through thoughtless recklessness, as well as for what they do with malicious intent. Men are to be held accountable, not only for the injuries which they wilfully perpetrate, but for the injuries which they occasion to others through wanton carelessness or even thoughtless indifference. The person who set his neighbor's barley-stacks on fire was required to make restitution, although he did not intend to burn him out. The responsibility comes back on him who kindled the flames. Let us apply the principle of this divine enactment to our own times, and point out the moral dangers of *playing with fire.* Perhaps we may discover that some very respectable people are often very destructive incendiaries.

1. If I invite a group of young men in my house to surround a card-table, I may simply design to furnish them an hour's amusement.

But perhaps a lust for gambling may lie latent in some young man's breast, and I may quicken it into life by my offer of a temptation. There is fire in that pack of cards! And I deliberately place that fire amid the inflammable passions of that youthful breast. On *me* rests the consequences of the act, as well as upon him whom I lead into temptation. The motive does not alter the result by one iota.

> "For evil is wrought by want of thought,
> As well as by want of heart."

2. Among social virtues none is more popular than that of hospitality. When bountifully practised toward the *needy*, it rises to the dignity of a Christian grace. And ordinary hospitalities may be set to the credit of a generous spirit. But here is the master or mistress of a house who spread their table with a lavish provision for the entertainment of their evening guests. Among the abundant viands of that table the lady of the house places the choicest brands of Madeira wine, and on a

side-board she sets out a huge bowl of inviting punch. And among the invited guests of the evening comes a man who has promised the wife of his early love that he will never again yield to his awful appetite and turn their sweet home into a hell. He sees the tempter in that accursed punch-bowl, and is pressed very courteously to "take a glass." The fire "catches in the dry thorns" in an instant. He drinks. He goes reeling into his own door that night, and his whole household is in a flame of excitement and terror, and agony and shame. *Now who kindled that fire?* Let her who put that bottle to her neighbor's lips make answer! According to the Jewish law, the incendiary was required to pay the damages of the conflagration. But what "restitution" can be made for a ruined character, a desolated home, or a broken heart?

If my house and its contents are destroyed by fire, the insurance company may restore my pecuniary loss. But they cannot replace the precious keepsakes and the relics of the

loved and lost which my dwelling contained. To-day there are thousands of human houses in New York and Brooklyn — dwellings of immortal souls — that are on fire! In these burning bodies of our fellow-men are precious things beyond the wealth of Ophir, — hopes, talents, faculties, affections, and an immortality of being. Who kindled those fires? We answer that every one who tempts another to the social glass is a partner in producing the conflagration. Who *feed* the fires? Unquestionably the venders of strong drink, who, for lucre's sake, deal out the liquid flames of perdition. The proprietors of the 10,000 drinking-saloons in our twin cities do not aim to kill their fellow-men. But they do kill them, whatever be their secret motives in pursuing their abominable traffic. At the bar of God they will be held responsible. And let me inquire just here whether those Christian citizens who do not even lift a finger to sustain the law which *banks the grog-seller's fires during God's own Sabbath* are not themselves partially guilty for some of

the consequences of the wide-spread conflagration. We commend this question to the consciences of our neighbors on the day of election.

3. The artillery of this divine law against incendiarism has a wide range. It is pointed against that social nuisance, the *slanderer*. "Behold how great a matter his little fire kindleth!" The utterance of evil reports may be well likened to playing with fire. For there is but a spark required to set a whole neighborhood in a blaze; and when the flame gets under way it is beyond all human control. No matter that the spark may have been lighted without malicious motive. The ugly scorch upon the commercial integrity of the merchant, or upon the good name of the Christian minister, or upon the reputation of the young maiden, may not have been the prompting of wilful malignity. But the scorch is there; and somebody struck the spark.

A careless word sometimes makes irremediable mischief. I have read that a foolish young English clerk — fond of practical jokes

— once said to a friend, "Have you heard that E—— & Co., the bankers, have stopped payment?" He merely meant that the banking-house had as usual closed up for the night. But he amused himself by seeing how he had startled his friend. He did not stop to explain his real meaning. His friend mentioned the alarming report to another: the rumor spread. Next day there was a "run upon the bank," and Messrs. E—— & Company were obliged to suspend payment! The silly youth did not mean to burn down the commercial credit of a prosperous house: he only meant to amuse himself *by playing with fire.* And a kindred mischief to his is perpetrated by every one who retails contemptible gossip, or gives birth to a scurrilous slander. "An abomination to the Lord is the false witness who speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

4. This law against incendiarism applies to every utterance of spiritual error and infidelity. He who utters a devilish suggestion to corrupt the innocence of chastity sets fire

to passion, and becomes the incendiary of a soul. He who scatters a pernicious literature comes under the same condemnation. He who sows scepticism, by tongue or pen, sets fire to the "standing corn" of righteous opinion. Beware how you play with the sparks of falsehood! Beware how you play with the fire of wicked *suggestion*, that may kindle a blaze of sin in another's heart! Beware how you fling an infidel thought among the growing barley of a young and sensitive mind! For in the day of final reckoning you will be called up to answer to the question, who *kindled* the fire?

CHRIST CLEANSING THE HEART-TEMPLE.

IN what a turmoil and confusion did our blessed Lord find the temple when he entered it on a certain time of the Passover! A noisy crowd of money-changers and cattle-brokers are driving their selfish and sacrilegious traffic. Herds of oxen are lowing; sheep are bleating; cages of doves block up the way; the air is filled with the jabbering babel of traders' tongues, all eager to sell their beasts and birds for the sacrifices. It is a terrible desecration of an edifice sacred to the Lord of heaven and earth.

Right among these noisy traffickers enters One who is greater than the temple. Seizing the small rushes which were used for tying up the cattle, our Saviour twisted them into a "scourge" or whip, and drove out the whole

crowd of profane intruders. The tables of the money-changers are overturned; and to those who were turning the sanctuary into a pigeon-house the Divine Master says: "Take these things hence! make not my Father's house a house of merchandise!" The temple is cleansed in an instant. Not, of course, by the terror inspired by a small whip in a single hand; but by a supernatural authority, — the authority of the Divine Messiah, which asserted itself in such a manner that the sacrilegious rabble moved off, convicted of their wrong, and overawed by the rebuke of that Sovereign who was "Lord also of the temple."

In this striking scene I find a parable, full of spiritual instruction. The soul of every Christian is a *temple*. It becomes such at the time of conversion. Formerly a habitation of the evil one, it becomes, by regeneration, a "habitation of God through the Spirit." As the stones on Mount Moriah were but common stones until they were consecrated to God's use, so the powers and affections of a sinner's heart become, through true conversion, a

dwelling-place for Jesus. "Know ye not," said Paul, "that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy, for the temple of God is holy; *which temple ye are.*" What a glorious idea this presents of a faithful follower of Christ! His heart is a sanctuary of the spirit,—full of holy thoughts and devout aspirations. Not a gloomy cloister; but a tabernacle of praise, with strains of lofty melody pealing through the arches, and the sweet incense of gratitude ascending from the altars. The mercy-seat of prayer is there; and the flames of love, consuming the offerings, send forth the "savor of a sweet smell."

But alas! how often is this inner temple of the believer profaned by intruders as sacrilegious as they who brought their beasts and birds and bullion into the sacred edifice on Mount Moriah! Selfishness brings in its herd of sinful schemes into the apartments which belong to Christ alone. Gradually, and under fair pretences, self edges in,—first into the

outer courts, and then into the very sanctum of the soul. But into this profaned heart how often does the loving Jesus come with his *scourge* of sharp chastisements! How often does he twist the very plans of our selfishness into a thong to smite us! Selfishness becomes its own retribution. Our pride, too, is often fearfully scourged by humiliations and mortifications and exposures. Poor, boastful Peter! What a scourging did his self-conceit receive in Pilate's garden! And what a terrible whip of retribution did David's lust receive, when the child of his guilt lay dead before his weeping eyes! It was to purify, and not to destroy, that the chastising Lord entered into those heart-temples. And our pitying Saviour, when he weaves out of our sins a scourge to punish us, only carries out his discipline of mercy. Whom he *loveth* he chasteneth; and *scourgeth* (observe the word) — *scourgeth* every child whom he receiveth.

We could point to hundreds of church-members into whose heart-temple covetousness has intruded and set up its tables

of traffic, in despite of that solemn caution, "Ye *cannot* serve God *and* Mammon." Such men are eaten up by the greed for gain; they are thoroughly worldly-minded and unspiritualized. The heart that was once a temple has become a warehouse, or a broker's office. Let such backsliding professors look out for the scourge! Perhaps it may come in a sore spiritual distress; perhaps in commercial disaster, which shall overturn the tables and scatter the hoards of coveted wealth. In 1857, the Lord entered into the American Church with the scourge of commercial chastisements, and threw down the tables of traffic in terrible bankruptcies; but it was to prepare the way for the most glorious revivals known in this century.

Sinful ambition is another intruder into the heart sanctuary. "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." But, in spite of this tender warning, ambition gets possession; until at length the indignant Master enters to overthrow our guilty schemes, with the stern rebuke, "Take these things hence;"

"he that exalteth himself shall be abased." Methinks that some of us may have set up *domestic idols* in the temple of the heart. We loved them more than we loved Him who gave them. And when the scourge came, — came, too, in an unlooked-for hour, — it drew the heart's blood! The surgery of bereavement was terrible. The death-wail sounded through the inner chambers, while the Master was carrying off our idols. But, when the idol was gone, there was more room for Him to whom the *whole heart* had once been promised. When our loved ones are taken, then, like the sisters of Bethany, we send for that FRIEND who had been quite too much forgotten or neglected before. Blessed be the chastisements, however bitter, which purify the heart for Jesus! Blessed be the scourge, if it is only in that hand which was once pierced for our redemption! Love never gives one blow too many, or too hard.

There is one other thought worth noting here, if it be not too close a torturing of the

very words of the inspired narrative. You will observe that, when Christ cleansed the temple of intruders, he "made a scourge of *small* cords." He wove the little withes that lay about the floors into the whip of chastisement. So does that same loving Lord now employ little trials as well as great bereavements in the spiritual discipline of his people. Many a Christian has a daily vexation to try his patience or to punish his besetting sins. Little pains, little annoyances, and little discomforts are as much a part of our discipline as are the formidable adversities that occasionally smite us like hurricanes. Little vexations often creep into the secret places, and, by finding out the sore spots, discover to us our faults. Let us not despise the chastening of our Divine Physician and Purifier when he sends small trials as well as great ones to test our graces or to drive out our sins. Remember that it was with a scourge of small cords that the Lord of the temple expelled the profane intruders from his dwelling-place. Better, far better, to bear the scourge of little

cords, when laid on by the hand of love, than to endure the whip of scorpions in that world where punishment can torture and sting, but may never purify.

WEDDED FOR HEAVEN.

NEXT to choosing the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour and guide, the most important choice a young man can make is that of a *wife.* Yet this most eventful step is too often regarded from first to last in the most trivial aspect. With many it is the merest matter of fancy or boyish caprice. Sometimes a wife is sought for the sole gratification of sensual appetite. Sometimes marriage is viewed entirely as a shrewd pecuniary speculation. Indolent, extravagant young men often intrigue through a marriage-vow for a wealth which they are too lazy or too thriftless to earn by honest toil. On the other hand, many an ambitious parent has sought to purchase a splendid "establishment" with the sweetest charms that Heaven has bestowed

upon a daughter. What baser bargain can be consummated? And when a woman consents to sell her person without her heart to a rich suitor, what is it but the essence of prostitution without its loathsome name? Only one man should be rich enough to win my daughter: it is he who can offer a love without a rival, and a character without a stain. True religion, common sense, industrious habits, and a warm heart, — when a young man can offer *these*, no daughter who is worthy of such a prize will be likely to "say him *nay*."

With what a rash recklessness do millions rush into the momentous engagements that yield their inevitable retribution of domestic misery! How few seek by prayer for Divine guidance when choosing the companion of their heart, their home, and their destiny! Far oftener, we fear, is it passion than prayer that controls this great decision. The gratification of a fancy, the excitement of a courtship, and the frolic of a wedding are frequently the only preparations for the serious realities of wedded life.

Boyish caprice and girlish romance look vastly different in human eyes when they have crystallized down into the permanent forms of daily existence under the same roof, at the same table and fireside, year in and year out, for summer and winter, for sickness or health, for better or worse, clear on to the doorway of the tomb. When the novelty of wedded life has worn away, and perhaps the beauty of the fair face that inspired the early passion has quite faded out, then there must be something *solid* left behind, or marriage is a mockery and its coveted happiness but a dream. There must be mutual confidence, mutual respect, unity of aim, and old-fashioned love: there ought to be also a union of hearts in the love of Christ, in closet devotions, and at the communion-table. When these are the qualities of a nuptial union, it is a marriage in the Lord. It "shineth more and more" from the auroral dawn of first love unto the perfect day of rich and ripened bliss. When young hearts are wedded in Christ, they are wedded for heaven. It is a de-

lightful act for a Christian minister to join such hearts and hands together; but the words sometimes stick in his throat when he attempts to pronounce a benediction on a marriage which neither common sense nor conscience have had a share in bringing about. His *fee* seems to come out of Judas's bag.

The admirable Philip Henry, of Broad Oaks, England, sought the hand of an only daughter in a somewhat prominent family. Her father said to her, "This young man seems to be an excellent preacher, but I do not know whence he came." "True," replied the daughter; "but I know *where he is going*, and I want to go along with him." The marriage proved eminently happy, and one of the children was the famous commentator. When his own son Matthew and his daughters asked his consent to their marriage, he said, "Please God, and please yourselves, and then you will be sure to please me." At their weddings he saluted them with a fatherly kiss, and said, "Other people wish you much happiness, but I wish you much *holiness:* if you have that, you are certain to be happy."

No two steps in a man's life are so solemn as those which join him to Christ's church, and join him to a wife. Marriage is an ordinance of God. It has often proved a "saving ordinance" to those who had no other tie to Christianity. The men whom a wise marriage has saved (with God's blessing) are innumerable. The men whom a reckless, wretched marriage have ruined, — are their histories not written in the "Book of the Chronicles" of prayerless homes and impenitent death-beds?

"Rebekah," said a dying husband to the wife who bent over him in remorseful agony, — "Rebekah, I am a lost man. You opposed our family worship and my secret prayer. You drew me away into temptation, and to neglect every religious duty. I believe my fate is sealed. Rebekah, you are the cause of my everlasting ruin." Terrible in eternity will be the reunion of those who helped each other on the downward road, partners in impiety, and wedded for perdition.

On the other hand, many a man has owed

his conversion to the steadfast, noble, attractive godliness of a praying wife. "I never doubted the immediate answer of prayer since the conversion of my husband," said a devoted Christian once to her pastor. He had long been a stranger to God, and bitter in his opposition to the Gospel. During a powerful revival in her church she attended a morning prayer-meeting. This annoyed him, and he denounced it as a waste of time, and forbade her to go again. Next morning she came down with her bonnet on to go to the meeting. He sternly said, "If you *do* dare to go, you will be sorry for it." She could not speak: the rudeness of her husband crushed her into silence. But she determined not to retreat; and when she reached the meeting she could only bow her face on the desk before her, and pour forth her tears and prayers for the obdurate heart she had left behind her. There was certainly *one* praying woman in that gathering.

When evening came, the kind wife put away the children in the crib, took her needle,

and sat down by the fire. Presently the husband came in. "Wife, are you not going to meeting to-night?" "No," she replied gently: "I thought I would stay home with you." He sat awhile in guilty silence: the fire burned brightly in the grate, and a hotter fire burned in the poor fellow's heart. "Wife," he exclaimed, "I can't stand this any longer. The words I spoke this morning to you have tormented me all day. I can't get any peace till you have forgiven me and prayed for me. *Won't* you pray for me? Oh, what a life I have led!" They knelt together. "That night I shall remember through eternity," said the happy woman, afterward. "There was no sleep for us. Before the dawn of day peace dawned into his soul: we went to the morning meeting together, and he rose and confessed Jesus as his Redeemer." That man walked faithfully with God ever after: from that memorable day they two were *wedded for heaven.*

Happy are those who, like Aquila and Priscilla, are united in the Lord! Happy

are they who walk the life-journey, — all the safer and all the happier for walking it hand in hand, keeping step to the voice of duty and of God. Wedded in time, they are wedded for heaven; and will sit down together, with exquisite rapture, at the "marriage-supper of the Lamb."

LIKE FATHER, LIKE FAMILY.

MANY a sermon has been preached to mothers; many a tract and treatise written on the mother's influence. But how often are sermons preached to fathers? Is there any power for good or evil greater than the influence of him who *leads the family*, who propagates his own character in the persons and the souls of his children, who lives his own life over again in the lives of those whom he has begotten?

Like father, like family. Set this down as a philosophical principle. Occasional exceptions do not undermine the rule: it is an organic one. The father impresses himself upon his children just as undesignedly, but just as surely, as I impress my shadow on the ground when I walk into the sunshine. The father cannot help it, if he would. The

father *leads*, by God's decree. He makes the home-law; fixes the precedents; creates the home-atmosphere; and the "odor of the house" clings to the garments of the children if they go around the globe. "His father was a Papist," or "his father was a Protestant," is the sufficient reason that determines most men's religious opinions. "He is a chip of the old block," said some one when he heard the younger Pitt's first speech. "Nay," replied Burke, "he is the old block himself."

In nothing is this so true as in moral resemblances. A father's devoted godliness is often reproduced in his children. But still oftener are his errors and his vices. He commonly sets the habits of the household. Whatever "fires the father kindles, the children gather the wood." If the father rises late on the Sabbath morning, the boys come down late and ill-humored to the table. If he goes on a Sunday excursion, they must carry the lunch and the fishing-tackle, and share in the guilty sports. If he wishes to read a Sunday paper, then George or Tom must go out to buy it.

In looking over my congregation, I find that, while several pious fathers have unconverted children, there are but few prayerless fathers who have converted sons. The *pull* of the father downward is too strong for the upward pull of the Sabbath school and the pulpit. If the father talks money constantly, he usually rears a family for Mammon. If he talks pictures and books at his table, he is likely to awaken a thirst for literature or art. If he talks horses and games and prize-fights, he brings up a family of jockeys and sportsmen. If he makes his own fireside attractive in the evening, he will probably succeed in anchoring his children at home. But if he hears the clock strike eleven in the theatre or the club-house, he need not be surprised if his boys hear it strike twelve in the gambling-house or the drinking-saloon. If he leads in irreligion, what but the grace of God can keep his imitative household from following him to perdition? The history of such a family is commonly written in that sadly frequent description given in

the Old Testament: "He walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him."

I find two very different types of paternal religion. Both are nominally Christian. The one parent prays at his family altar for the conversion of his children. He then labors to fulfil his own prayers. He makes religion prominent in his family: it is as pervasive as the atmosphere. The books that are brought home, the papers selected, the amusements chosen, the society that is sought, the aims in life that are set before those children, all bear in one direction, and that the right one. God is not invoked by that father to convert his offspring to godliness, while he is doing his utmost to pervert them to worldliness, or self-seeking, or frivolity, no more than he would ask God to restore his sick child while he was giving the poor boy huge doses of opium or strychnine.

Yet there is a class of professing Christians who do this very thing. They pray for a child's conversion, and yet on the very

evenings when prayer-meetings are being held they take that son or daughter to the opera or the fashionable rout. They pray that their households may live for God, and then set them an example of most intense money-clutching and mammon-worship. A man sits down with a solemn face to the communion-table, and then comes home to gossip, to crack jokes, to talk politics, to entertain Sunday visitors at a sumptuous feast, to do any thing and every thing which tends to dissipate the impressions of God's worship and the sacramental service. Such fathers never follow up a pungent sermon, never watch for opportunities to lead their children Christward, never co-operate with God's Spirit for the conversion of an impenitent son or daughter. What must an ingenuous child think of such a father's prayers ?

I entreat parents most solemnly not to stand in the way of their children's salvation. If you do not help the good work, pray do not hinder it. The selfish or inconsistent life of some fathers is enough to

neutralize all the teachings and appeals of both pulpit and Sabbath school. To Paul's question, "How knowest thou, O wife! if thou mayst save thy husband?" we would add the startling query, "How knowest thou, O father! but thou mayst destroy thy own children?"

How many a devoted praying wife is struggling to lead her children heavenward, and finds her every effort nullified by the open irreligion of an ungodly father! She toils on *alone*, prays on alone, works alone, and weeps alone over their perils and the fatal example at their own fireside. God pity and support her! She is striving to bear her children on her own shoulders; but to-day her sad failure is written in the homely adage, *Like father, like family.*

WRESTLING PRAYER.

"THERE'S nae good dune, John, till ye get to the *close grups*." So said "Jeems, the door-keeper" of Broughton Place church, Edinburgh, to the immortal Dr. John Brown, the author of "Rab and his Friends." Old Jeems got into a marvellous nearness with God in prayer, and conversed with Him as he would with his "ain father." He understood the power of a *close grip* when an earnest soul is wrestling with God for a blessing.

Jacob, the patriarch, had such a struggle in that remarkable and mystical scene at Penuel. We are told that he wrestled with the Angel of the Covenant — who *may* have been the incarnate Jesus — until the breaking of the day. The angel said, "Let me go, the day breaketh." Here was a trial of the patriarch's faith.

"What is that to me," thought the eager man, "that the day is breaking? I must have the blessing *now*. There is no daylight of hope for me unless I obtain what I am struggling for. *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me!*" He triumphed on the spot.

So clung the Syro-Phœnician mother to Christ when she was beseeching him to heal her sick daughter. The Master seemed to put her off, in order to try the mettle of her faith. But she came up into what the old Scotchman called a closer grip, with the heart of infinite love, and she carried the day. "Go thy way," said Jesus unto her. "O woman! great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And so he granted to a great faith what he might have denied to a little faith. Precisely so is it with Christians now, and with churches. An honest, persevering faith — a faith that works while it prays, a faith that holds on through discouragements — achieves the result it pleads for. For faith creates such a condition of things that it is wise for God to grant what would otherwise be denied.

There are many things in the providence of God to which we ought to submit. We ought to submit unconditionally and without a murmur to chastisements and bereavements. But there are certain other things placed in our way expressly that we may wrestle with them and overcome them. If a temptation assails us, we are never to submit to it. If a difficulty blocks our path of duty, then is the time for a stout faith to "remove the mountain." A father whose children are yet unconverted has no business to sit down in silent submission to such a state of things. Neither has a pastor or a church any right to sit down submissively to the terrible fact that the truth is powerless, and no souls are converted. The Syro-Phœnician woman would have done wrong if she had gone home submissive when Christ *seemed* to be denying her reasonable request. God is a supreme sovereign up yonder; but we are responsible free agents down here. And as a sovereign He has commanded us to pray, to "pray without ceasing." He reserves to Himself the right to grant our requests

when He chooses and as He chooses. It is our right to pray, and it is God's right to bestow just such answers as seem best to Him. I would define faith to be that temper of the soul which submits to all which God orders, but *never submits to what God can better*. If we yield to sin or to discouragements when we ought to struggle against them, or if we yield to the absence of spiritual blessings without an earnest wrestling for those blessings, we are unworthy clods, and we deserve to suffer.

What a magnificent epic are the triumphs of faith! The Bible history fairly shines with the bright record of persistent, prevailing prayer. The early Church were "continuing with one accord in supplication" when the Holy Spirit descended in the Pentecost. When the Apostle Peter was locked up in a dungeon, prayer was made without ceasing by the people of God for him; and the heaven-sent angel opened his dungeon doors, and sent him to the prayer-meeting as a living witness to their prevalence with God. I have seen awakened sinners come into prayer-gatherings

who were just as truly delivered out of Satan's prison as Peter was, and by the same agency of intercessory prayer. I have known a mother to cling to the mercy-seat, and to wrestle with God until the beloved child whom she could not convert has been converted. The wife has wrestled for her impenitent husband — "I will not let thee go, except Thou bless him!" We have seen a godly wife sit and sob through a prayer-meeting until the handkerchief that covered her face was soaked with tears; and she has gone home to find her husband himself weeping over his sins.

Prayer is power. When Luther was in the mid-heat of his awful battle with the Great Beast, he used to say, "I cannot get on without three hours a day in prayer." John Welsh, of Scotland, often leaped out of his bed at midnight, and wrapped a plaid about him, and wrestled with the Lord until the breaking of the day. His preaching was mighty when he came to his pulpit from these *Penuels* of pleading with his God. There is many a church

among us which is in a midnight of slumber and barrenness. But repentance and wrestling prayer will *bring the daýbreak.*

Unless we are much mistaken, there are two things which American Christians ought to do. The one is to quit the companionship of a self-indulgent, corrupting "world." The other is to come into closer companionship with Christ. Closer to Christ in godly living. Closer in persevering prayer. And let us not forget, brethren, that it is the "close grup" which achieves the victory, and brings the revival blessing.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS—FROM GOD.

THE less we expect from this world the better for us. The less we expect from our fellow-men, whether of spiritual help or of inspiring example, the smaller will be our disappointment. He that leans on his own strength leans on a broken reed. We are always *going* to be something stronger, purer, and holier. Somewhere in the future there always hangs in the air a golden *ideal* of a higher life that we are going to reach; but as we move on the dream of better things moves on before us also. It is like the child's running over behind the hill to catch the rainbow. When he gets on the hill-top the rainbow is as far off as ever. Thus does our day dream of a higher Christian life keep floating away from us; and we are left to realize what frail, unreliable creatures we are when we rest

our expectations of growth and of victory over evil in ourselves. "My soul, wait thou only upon GOD! My expectation is only *from Him.*"

God never deceives us and never disappoints us. I do not say that God never allows us to be disappointed in our darling plans of life, in our children, or in our most cherished projects. What I mean is, that we are never disappointed in God. When we study the Almighty, whether in His glorious Word or in Nature, we find our utmost expectation overtopped by the stupendous and magnificent reality. Read such a book as "Ecce Cœlum," and see if you are disappointed in your Creator. When, too, we obey God, we always find our reward, either sooner or later, — just as surely as light comes with the sunrise. When we trust God, He never deceives us. When we pray to Him *aright*, — that is, with faith, with perseverance, with submissiveness, and with a single eye to God's will, — He answers us. He *always* returns the best answer possible. Our

Heavenly Father makes no mistakes in His dealings with suppliants. He is a sovereign, but not a despot. If it pleases Him to keep us waiting for the trial of our faith, then we must wait.

But delays are not denials. God's long-dated promises are honored in His own good time. If we had but to demand from God just what we desired, and when we desired it, we should be stealing His sceptre and ruling the Almighty Ruler. Did you ever know a child that ruled its parents without ruining itself? And, if it spoils our children to let them always have their own way, I am sure that it would be my ruin if I could bend my Heavenly Father's will to all my own wishes. If *this* be your "expectation" from God, He will very soon teach you better.

God fulfils no foolish, greedy, presumptuous requests. But He does keep His promises. (He never promised to let you or me *hold the reins.*) He always answers a right prayer, and in the way and at the time which His all-wise love determines. And with what unex-

pected deliverances and blessings He often loves to take us by surprise! I never went through a revival in my congregation without discovering that I could not trust God our Saviour too much, or my fellow-man too little.

Are you Christ's, my brother? Then all things are yours. In him dwelleth all the *fulness* of the Godhead. "Of his fulness have all we received," said that beloved disciple who leaned on the Saviour's bosom. John was never disappointed in his Lord; nor was Paul either, when he found himself "filled with all the fulness of God." There is a fulness of sufficiency in Christ as a Divine Redeemer. His blood cleanseth from all sin. There is a fulness of justifying merit in him; for "there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." There is a fulness of power in him who "is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him." There is a fulness of love in him who "having loved his own who are in the world loveth them to the end." In my Lord and Saviour Jesus

Christ is a fulness of grace and strength and peace and consolation that no man has ever been able to explore, and all the needy sinners in the universe could never be able to exhaust.

To little brooks men have often gone in seasons of drought, and found only a parched bed, cracked open with the heat. But who ever saw the Atlantic *low?* What ship ever failed to set sail for Liverpool through lack of water? Oh! the *depth* of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge and grace of God! When some one urged old John Jacob Astor to subscribe for a certain object, and told him that his own son had subscribed to it already, the old man replied, very dryly: "Ah! he has *got a rich father.*" Brother, you and I have got a rich Father, too. You are an heir of the King of kings. Then ask for great things, for "all our expectation is from Him."

God must take it ill in us that we ask for so little, and with such a puny faith. He says: "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." He must wonder that we ex-

pect so little from Him. "The Lord taketh pleasure" — in whom? Why, in "those that hope in His mercy. He loveth to be inquired after." Oh, if we would only expect enough, and strive after enough, and ask enough from our infinitely rich Father up yonder, who can tell what blessings we might obtain!

Paul only expressed the unanimous judgment of all the heirs in God's household when he exclaimed: "I *know* whom I have believed." He summed up his glorious past and his expectations for the future when he cried out with rapture: "I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; *henceforth* there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the righteous Judge shall give me in that day!" Paul "looked for" that magnificent inheritance. So do I. So may you, if you are a follower of Jesus. I expect that if I endure to the end I shall be saved. I expect, and confidently, too, that through faith I shall be kept by the power of God unto salvation. I expect that when

I walk through the valley of the shadow of death He will be with me; His rod and His staff will comfort me. Heaven is to me only an expectation. So is to-morrow's sunrise. I have not yet *seen* either of them; but they are coming. Behind this day's midnight lies to-morrow's dawn. Behind that night called death lies the day-dawn of Heaven's exceeding weight of glory!

I expect that, if I hold fast to Christ, I shall see it. Beyond all that human eye hath yet seen or human ear heard is that glory to be revealed to me! I expect a *joy* that shall be to me as a "harp," and a *triumph* that shall be to me as a "palm," and a *glory* that shall be as a "crown unfading." Figurative or not though the words may be, I expect the substance which they describe. My soul, wait thou only upon God; my expectation is *from Him!*

"Our knowledge of that life is small,
The eye of faith is dim;
But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,
And we shall be like him!"

HYMNS OF LONGING FOR REST.

"OH that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away, and be at rest!" The reference in this beautiful verse is to the turtle-dove of Palestine, a bird of such free spirit that if confined in a cage, it soon droops and dies. How often the child of God breathes this yearning aspiration for a higher and a holier atmosphere! How often, in seasons of grief and disappointment and utter disgust with the inconstancy of our fellow-creatures, the homesick heart pines for escape into the very bosom of Jesus! For there only is *rest*, full, sweet, and all-satisfying.

This aspiration is not only breathed in prayer. It is uttered in song. Many of our richest hymns are prayers in metre. And few yearnings break forth oftener in the psalmodies

of God's people than the yearning for soul-rest. Of the hymns that are pitched to this key we might mention many. Of the hymnists who have composed them, none is more celebrated than JAMES MONTGOMERY.

He is the Cowper of the nineteenth century, — not in the poetry of nature, but in sacred song. Scotland gave him birth, as she did to Henry Lyte and Horatius Bonar. He was born in Ayrshire, the land of Robert Burns, in 1771. His father was a Moravian missionary, who labored and died in the West Indies. James united with the Moravian Church at the age of forty-three, and his memory is held in high veneration among that small but true-hearted band of Christians. The Moravian body is like a tube-rose, small in bulk, but sends its sweet odors afar off. With this communion Montgomery worshipped until in his later years, and then he attended an evangelical Episcopal church (St. George's) in Sheffield, England.

During my student days I spent some time at Sheffield, and often met the venerable poet.

He was small of stature, with hair as white as snow. Although he had long been an editor, — and once been imprisoned for his bold utterances in his newspaper, the *Iris*, — he would be easily mistaken for a clergyman. He wore an exceedingly conspicuous white cravat, which reached close to his chin, and gave you the impression that he was suffering from a chronic sore throat. When I first called on him at his residence, "The Mount," several of his most familiar lines began to repeat themselves to me, such as, —

> "Friend after friend departs,
> Who hath not lost a friend?"

And that other exquisite verse, which often weaves itself into our secret devotions: —

> "Here in the body pent,
> Absent from Him I roam;
> *Yet nightly pitch my moving tent,*
> *One day's march nearer home.*"

There are few finer verses in the whole range of devotional poetry. It is a pilgrim's wayfaring song, as he pulls up the tent-pins

every morning, and moves onward towards his everlasting rest.

Montgomery never visited this country, but he was full of warm enthusiasm towards America, in whose churches his hymns are sung every Sabbath. He was also full of honest indignation that so many people would persist in confounding him with the spasmodic Robert Montgomery, whose poem on "Satan" has been impaled, like a buzzing beetle on a pin, by the sharp pen of Macaulay. "Only think," said the dear old poet to me, "that I should have just got a letter telling me that my poem on *Satan* is the *best I ever wrote.*" I do not wonder that his wrath waxed warm under such an imputation. The last time I ever saw the veteran, he was sitting in his pew at St. George's, the "good, gray head" bending reverently over his prayer-book, as he joined in the responses. He "flew away, and was at rest," in 1854, at the ripe old age of eighty-three.

Montgomery's most popular hymn is that one which breathes out the longing of a weary heart: —

"Oh! where shall rest be found, —
Rest for the weary soul?
'Twere vain the ocean depths to sound,
Or pierce to either pole."

Ten thousand times have God's best beloved children, when made sick at the worthlessness and emptiness of worldly treasures, broke out in the fervid protestation: —

"This world can never give
The bliss for which we sigh;
'Tis not the whole of life to live,
Nor all of death to die."

Of Montgomery's other favorite hymns, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire," and "What are these in bright array," I wish I had space to speak. But we must confine ourselves in this brief article to those songs of Zion which are full of longings for the better life and the better land.

Of this class of hymns there is one which everybody knows and everybody sings, and yet almost nobody knows its authorship. For *Robert Seagrave* is one of God's "hidden ones" from all celebrity in the world of letters.

He was a minister of the English Established Church, but being a caged dove there, he broke loose into Dissent. This unfettered spirit of his gave birth to that vigorous hymn whose uplift has carried us often into the higher climes · —

> "Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings,
> Thy better portion trace ;
> Rise from transitory things,
> Towards heaven, thy native place."

Seagrave sang this one bird-song about the year 1748, but I never heard that he sang again. But his inspiring lyric is ringing yet, like the notes of a lark at the gates of heaven. Probably all the sermons preached that year throughout Christendom have not lifted so many souls towards the gates of pearl as that single melody of Robert Seagrave. We must all seek to become acquainted with him in our Father's house.

Yes, and we shall all love to know Horatius Bonar there, and thank him for his many hymns, so full of heavenward aspiration. Another singer, from our own land too, who

has lately flown above the clouds, sweet, sorrowful Phebe Cary. For she taught us all to sing, amid our care-burdens and our crosses, —

"One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er:
I am *nearer* home to-day
Than I ever have been before."

SUNSHINY CHRISTIANS.

"A CHEERFUL heart doeth good like a medicine." Our translation has it a "merry heart;" but the word has got rather "dissipated" in these modern days, and savors of jollity, rather than wholesome heart-joys. Once the word had so discreet a meaning that the apostle inquires, "Is any one merry? Let him sing psalms." It is the same Greek expression as that one used by Paul in the midnight tempest, when he exhorted his fellow-voyagers to "be of good cheer."

There is a cheerfulness that is a Christian duty; yea, that is distinctly commanded to every heir of God. "Rejoice always; and again I say, rejoice." This cheerfulness is not the mere effervescence of animal spirits. Nor is it born of the decanter or the dance. It depends in no wise on exernal circum-

stances. Christian cheerfulness is that sunshiny, hopeful, happy frame which comes from *heart-health.* Such a temper of mind doeth the body good "like a medicine." For many a lean dyspeptic is dying of sheer worry and peevishness. The acrid humors of the mind strike through, and disease the digestive organs. The medicine such a man wants is not to be found in the drug store. A good dose of divine grace, with a few grains of thankfulness, and a bracing walk on some labor of love to the poor, will do more to put healthy blood into his weazen skeleton than all the drugs of the apothecary. A "merry heart" was about all the medicine that old Lyman Beecher ever took.

Cheerfulness, be it remembered, is a temper of the soul, and not dependent on external conditions. Some of the most miserable people we wot of are grumbling every day over porcelain and silver, and lay their wretched heads every night on embroidered pillows. The sunniest hearts I have ever found in my pastoral rounds have often

been lodged in houses so poverty-stricken and obscure that even the tax collector never found them. They were people who had very little of this world, but a great deal of the next. They took short views of this life, but long ones of the life to come. Living pretty much "from hand to mouth," they learn to trust God a great deal more than their prosperous brethren, who secretly trust — their own bank accounts and government bonds.

The happiest heart I encounter in Brooklyn belongs to an aged cripple, who lives on charity in a fourth story. She is old and poor, and without relatives, and lost even the power of speech twenty years ago! By dint of hard effort she can make a few words intelligible. But I never saw that withered face distorted by a frown; and a few Sabbaths since, when she was carried in to the communion-table, I looked down from the pulpit into that old saint's countenance, and it "shone like the face of an angel." She lives every day on the sunny side of Providence, and feeds hungrily on the promises. Jesus knows where

she lives. He "oft-times resorts thither." She is one of his hidden ones. That old disciple will not have far to go when the summons comes from her Father's house. She lives near the gate now, and catches the odors and the music of that "marriage supper" for which she has her wedding garment on. Would to God that some of the sour-spirited, morose, and melancholy Christians of our acquaintance could drop in to that old woman's garret occasionally, and borrow a vial of her *sunshine!*

Those who cannot visit such an antechamber of heaven for themselves may enjoy a kindred satisfaction in reading the brief biography of old "Uncle Johnson," — a tract of twenty-five pages, published by the "Presbyterian Board" Johnson was a Virginia negro, who died in Michigan at the almost incredible age of one hundred and twenty! He never would have lasted so long if he had not — like Father Cleveland, of Boston — carried about with him that cheerful heart that doeth good like a medicine.

One day, when he was at work in his garden, singing and shouting, his pastor looked over the fence and said: "Uncle, you seem very happy to-day." "Yes, massa. I'se just tinking." "What are you thinking about?" "Oh! I'se just tinking" (and the tears rolled down his black face) — "I'se tinking dat if de crumbs of joy dat fall from de Massa's table in dis world is so good, what will de *great loaf* in glory be! I tells ye, sir, dar will be enuf and to spare up dar."

Once Mr. F—— said to him, "Uncle Johnson, why don't you get into our meetings once in a while?" He answered: "Massa, I wants to be dere; but I can't '*have* myself." "You can't *behave?*" "Well, massa, ob late years de flesh is gettin' weak; and when dey gwin to talk and sing about Jesus, I gins to fill up, and putty soon I has to *holler*, and den some one'll say, 'Carry dat man out de door, he 'sturbs de meetin.'" "But you should hold in till you get home." "O massa! I can't hold in. I *bust* if I don't holler." (Would not it be a blessed thing for some prayer-

meetings that are now dying of dignity if they could have such a "holler" to wake them out of their slumber?) This jubilant old negro lived in literal dependence on God. When a gift was made to him, he received it as if sent to him by Elijah's ravens. "When I wants any ting, I jes asks de Lord, and He is sure to send it; sometimes afore I'se done askin', and den sometimes He holds back, jus' to see if I trust Him." One of the last things remembered of him was the message he gave to a minister who called to see him, when he was "waitin' for de chariot ob de Lord." "O massa!" said he, "if you gets home afore I do, tell 'em to keep de table standin', for old Johnson is holdin' on his way. I'se bound to be dere."

We have given so much of this article to a sketch of this sunny-souled pilgrim, not only because it might be new to most of our readers, but because such a living example of a "merry heart" is more impressive than a sermon on cheerfulness. There are three or four "recipes" for securing this sunshine in the soul.

(1.) Look at your mercies with *both* eyes; and at your troubles and trials with only half an eye.

(2.) Study contentment. In these days of inordinate greed and self-indulgence, keep down the accursed spirit of grasping. What they *don't have* makes thousands wretched.

(3.) Keep at some work of usefulness. Such men as "Uncle Vassar" and John Wanamaker are seldom troubled with the blues. Work for Christ brings heart-health.

(4.) Keep your heart's window always open toward heaven. Let the blessed light of Jesus' countenance shine in. It will turn tears into rainbows. The author of "Nearer, my God, to Thee" has sweetly sung: —

> "He sendeth sun, he sendeth shower,
> Alike they're needful to the flower;
> And joys and tears alike are sent,
> To give the soul fit nourishment.
> As comes to me or cloud or sun,
> Father! Thy will, not mine, be done."

THE BITTER WATERS SWEETENED.

THREE days of torrid and thirsty travel from the Red Sea brought the children of Israel to a fountain in the desert. All rush forward eagerly for a cooling draught. But alas! the waters are so bitter that neither man nor beast can drink them. The disappointing spring is at once named by the murmuring Israelites, *Marah*, which signifies the waters of "bitterness."

To this day a fountain is known (about seventeen hours' travel from the "wells of Moses"), which the Arabs still call *Howara*. It is supposed by many geographers to be the identical spring of Marah, for its waters are exceedingly brackish. Prof. Stanley of Oxford mentions a spring a short distance south of Howara which "was so bitter that neither men nor camels could drink it."

Beside one of these two fountains of bitterness stood the great host of thirsty Israel, with a terrible bitterness of disappointment in their hearts. They cry out against God. The deliverance at the Red Sea is forgotten. Past mercies are lost sight of, and present griefs seem to stir up all the acrid humors within them. They murmur against Moses, and exclaim despairingly, "What shall we drink?"

Fellow-pilgrims to the promised land, how exactly this scene tallies with our own experiences! Right after happy days of prosperity and mercy, we come suddenly upon a *Marah* of bitter disappointment. We had set our hearts upon some favorite project. Perhaps we were going on a long-coveted tour, and had made all our arrangements. But the day for the departure finds us on a sick-bed; and the medicine we swallow is not half so hard to take as the disappointment. Selfishness murmurs and chafes under the trial. But presently we begin to see that this bed of sickness lay right on the road to Canaan. We begin to talk with our own hearts, and to think over

our past lives. We begin to pray with a new hunger of soul, and to read God's promises with new eyes. We make fresh covenant with God, that, if He will restore us to health, we will use it for Him, and will walk more closely with Him. We take up one precious promise after another, and drop it into the fountain of trial, and lo! the waters begin to taste sweeter to us! Prayer becomes sweeter, and Christ's presence sweeter, and something within us whispers, "After all, is not this better for us than the journey to Europe or to the mountains? Is it not good for me that I have been shut up here with Jesus?"

Now this was just what happened to angry and disappointed Israel. The Lord showed to Moses a tree, which, when he had cast it into the fountain, made the waters to become so sweet that the whole host drank of them with delight. I doubt whether God created that tree miraculously; he simply "showed" it to Moses. So God does not create a Bible or a mercy-seat, or an atonement, or a jewel-casket of promises, or supplies of grace, espe-

cially for us. His Spirit simply opens our eyes to see them, and our hearts to enjoy them. He reveals to us the tree of healing which turns a draught of bitterness into a draught of holy joy. Thus, —

> "Trials make the promise sweet,
> Trials give new life to prayer,
> Bring me to the Saviour's feet,
> Lay me low, and keep me there."

It is delightful to sit down beside a child of God who has in his hand a bitter cup of trial, but the "sweet breath of Jesus" has turned the bitterness into such a blessing that he "tastes the love" of Jesus in every drop.

I love to hear old Richard Baxter exclaim, after a life of constant suffering, "O my God! I thank Thee for a bodily discipline of eight-and-fifty years."

I love to sit down by Harlan Page and hear him say, "A bed of pain is a precious place, when we have the presence of Christ. God does not send one unnecessary affliction. Lord! I thank thee for suffering. I deserve it. I deserve death eternal. Let me not complain

or dictate. I commit myself to thee, O Saviour, and to thy infinite love. I stop my mouth, and lie low beside thee!" So God built up that blood-bought soul faster than disease was pulling down the frail tenement in which it dwelt. And through the rents heaven's glory shone in with rapturous radiance!

I suppose there is rarely a Marah on earth more bitter than that which a father or mother reaches, when they bend over the coffin which holds the darling of their hearts and home. In all God's chemistry, is there any solvent which can sweeten such a draught of disappointment?

Yes, there is! I have now before me a tear-moistened letter from my beloved brother W——, the superintendent of the famous B—— Sabbath school. It was written by the waters of Marah. But mark how the angel of love is letting fall the sweetening leaves into the fountain. Brother W—— writes: —

"Our darling Hattie was another of God's beautiful things, wise beyond her years, more

like a sister to us older ones, than like a little child. On the last Sabbath morning that she came to the breakfast table, she had, as usual, her text; but it was a new one to her. 'Hide me under the shadow of Thy wing.' God heard the little tired body's prayer, and gathered the lamb to His bosom. We watched and watched beside her; and when all others had given her up, I was still hopeful, and taking the physician aside I inquired, 'Doctor, will she wake up, do you think?' His reply almost killed me as he covered his face and sobbed the answer, 'No: not till she wakes in heaven!' O my brother! I cannot tell you the anguish of that moment. I sat in the shadow of our great affliction, dumb. But Christ Jesus, the man of sorrows, was acquainted with my grief. He put his everlasting arm around me, — the friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Unto those that believe, he is precious; and never more so than when he brings heaven close up to us."

Beautiful words of a victorious soul! I send them through these pages as a bough

from the tree of experience, to sweeten the fountain of bitterness beside which many of my readers may be sitting to-day. If God's grace can make the waters of trial so sweet on earth, *what will the fountain be in heaven?*

THE GREAT HYMN OF PROVIDENCE.

A CORRESPONDENT expresses some surprise that in sketching the biographies of many of the foremost favorites in our Christian hymnology, no notice had yet been taken of Cowper's masterpiece. Certainly it was not from lack of loving admiration for a hymn which justly ranks among the half-dozen sublimest compositions in the whole range of sacred song. But it is not easy to say any thing new about so familiar a production. Let us briefly sketch its remarkable origin, for the information of those who have often sung it through tears, and yet never knew that it was born of tears and trials from the most gifted poetic soul in Britain.

About the beginning of the year 1773 Cowper was residing at Olney, on the borders of Huntingdonshire. He had recovered from

the awful gloom of that partial insanity which had cast its fearful cloud over his early manhood. Close by him lived and preached that robust man and minister of Christ, *John Newton.* They became as intimate as David and Jonathan; and it was from their very dissimilarity that there grew up such a loving fellowship between the bluff and brawny converted sailor, and the timid melancholy poet. Newton brought to Cowper just what he wanted — a devout spiritual guide, and a soul-cheering companion.

Between the two was originated and completed the rich and heaven-born *Olney Hymns.* To this famous collection John Newton contributed two hundred and eighty-six hymns — and Cowper added sixty-two. But the smaller contribution proved to be the more precious in weight of metal. Among Newton's many hymns are a few which God's people will always love to sing. But to that collection Cowper's genius brought those two gems of devotion, "O for a closer walk with God," and "There is a fountain filled with blood."

It yet remained for him to contribute one more — and one which ranks as the grandest *Hymn of Providence* in our mother tongue.

For seven years Cowper had been comparatively cheerful. The sun shone and the birds sang in his spiritual sky. But a foreboding impression of another attack of insanity began to creep over him. The presentiment grew deeper. The clouds gathered fast. It is said that he even meditated self-destruction, and left his quiet cottage to drown himself in the neighboring river Ouse! Whether this statement be true or not, it is certain that he went forth from his house under the pall of an overwhelming gloom. Just while these black clouds of despair were darting their vivid lightnings into his suffering soul, the grandest inspiration of his life broke upon him, and he began to sing out these wonderful words: —

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

For several years Cowper's splendid intel-

lect was to be under a total eclipse. The penumbra was already darkening its disc. But in full view of the impending calamity, the inspired son of song chanted forth those strains of holy cheer: —

> "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
> But trust Him for His grace;
> Behind a frowning providence,
> He hides a smiling face."

Cowper never could have sung that sublime anthem of victory except under the immediate inspiration of the "power from on high." It was to be his last song for many years. The storm was coming, but Cowper's eye of faith saw Jehovah "riding above the storm." The heavens gathered blackness, but the ineffable *smile* of his Divine Lord lurked behind the tempest. The "bud" of sorrow which was springing fast did have "a bitter taste," — the very wormwood was not more bitter, — but oh, how "sweet the flower" that it unfolded!

This matchless hymn of providence which God put into the soul of His afflicted servant has been a "song in the *night*" to millions of

His people when under the discouraging clouds of adversity. A beloved friend in the city of St. Johns tells me that during the terrible famine in Lancashire, England, the work ran low at one of the cotton-mills. Occupation and wages grew less day by day. At length the overseer met the half-starved operatives, and announced to them the fatal tidings, "*There is no more work.*" Flickering hope went out in black despair. One delicate sweet girl — thin and pale with suffering — arose amid the heart-broken company and began to sing the cheering words she had learned in the Sunday school: —

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take!
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

A sunburst of hope came over the despairing company when the sweet strain was ended. It proved a prophecy. For the proprietors

determined to struggle on a while longer, — and ere long that mill was running again at full work. This scene was a parable. It had its counterpart in the darkest hours of our nation's conflict, when we once heard Cowper's sublime lines quoted in a vast patriotic meeting, amid tears and thunders of applause. Thousands of God's children have chanted these stanzas as they walked through "valleys of death-shade." Blessings and honor and praises to Him who giveth us such songs in the night!

Such was the history of Cowper's unrivalled hymn of providence. We close this biography of an old and familiar hymn, by presenting a new and exquisite *evening hymn*, which most of our readers never saw before. It is to

Christ the Healer.

At even, ere the sun was set,
The sick, O Lord, around Thee lay;
Oh in what divers pains they met,
Oh in what joy they went away!

Once more, 'tis eventide, and we,
Oppressed with various ills, draw near;

What if Thy form we cannot see,
We know and feel that Thou art here.

O Saviour Christ! our woes dispel,
For some are sick, and some are sad,
And some have never loved Thee well;
And some have lost the love they had.

And some have found the world is vain,
Yet from the world they break not free;
And some have friends, who give them pain,
Yet have not sought a Friend in Thee.

And none, O Lord! have perfect rest,
For none are wholly free from sin;
And they who fain would serve Thee best
Are conscious most of wrong within.

O Saviour Christ! Thou too art man,
Thou hast been troubled, tempted, tried,
Thy kind but searching glance can scan
The very wounds that shame would hide.

Thy touch has still its ancient power.
No word from Thee can fruitless fall;
Here in this solemn evening hour,
And in Thy mercy, heal us all.

CHRIST IN THE NIGHT-STORM.

THE third watch of the night had nearly passed. For many weary hours the disciples have been toiling at the oars through the tempest. But all the strength of the fishermen's brawny arms can scarcely push forward the little boat against the angry waves which smite the bow like a sledge. Peter and John — who were brought up on this lake of Galilee — had never seen a rougher night.

There is no compass on board, and no lighthouse on the beach. Through the thick darkness the little bark is invisible to human eye. If Peter's anxious household had looked out from their door in Capernaum on that awful night, they could not have seen a boat's-length from the shore; or, if they had set the olive-lamp in the window, it might not have been

discovered by the toiling rowers in the smack. It is a fearful night to be out in; but there is One *Eye* that beholds them from the hills of Gadara. *Jesus watches them!*

Many of my readers may be, just now, in a fearful night-storm of trouble. One is in the darkness of a mysterious providence. Another is under a tempest of commercial disaster. He has lost the "rigging" of his prosperity; his canvas is torn to shreds, and his pride has come down as a top-sail comes down in a hurricane. Another one is toiling with the oars against a head-sea of poverty. The guiding rudder of a dear and trusted friend has been swept away by death. Still another one is in a midnight of spiritual despondency, and the promise-stars seem to be all shut out under gloomy clouds. My friend A—— is making a hard voyage, with her brood of fatherless children to provide for. Friend B—— has a poor intemperate husband on board with her; and Brother C——'s little bark hardly rises out of one wave of disaster before another sweeps over it. There are

whole boat-loads of disciples who are "toiling at rowing" over a dark sea of trouble. But *Jesus watches them!* His eye of love discerns every single child of his adoption over all the wide sea of human experience.

The hour of the Christian's extremity is the hour of Christ's opportunity. At the right moment Christ makes his appearance to the tempest-tost disciples on Genesareth. For we are told that "in the fourth watch of the night Jesus came to them, walking on the sea!" We do not wonder that the sublime and sudden miracle astounded them. We do not wonder that, as the ghost-like form draws nearer and nearer through the darkness, the awe-struck mariners throw down the oars, and cry out, "See! see! it is a spirit! it is a spirit!" But straightway Jesus speaks unto them, saying, "Be of good cheer; *it is I;* be not afraid." In an instant their fears vanish. Jesus comes near to them. He steps into the boat, and "the *wind ceased.*" The overjoyed disciples fall at his feet, and gratefully exclaim, "Truly, truly, thou art the Son of God!"

Now, good friends, who are breasting a midnight sea of trouble, open the eye of faith, and see that form on the waves! It is not an apparition; it is not a fiction of priestly fancies, as the scoffing sceptic has often insinuated. It is JESUS HIMSELF! It is one who was himself a "man of sorrows." It is one who has been tried on all points as we are, and yet without sin. It is the Divine Sufferer who says, "It is I; be of good cheer." Christ comes to you as a sympathizing Saviour. He comes as a cheering, consoling Saviour. His sweet assurance is, "Lo! I am with you. Fear not; I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by my name. Thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and they shall not overflow thee." Behold that Saviour! Receive him into the ship. No vessel can sink or founder with Jesus on board. No struggling soul, no struggling church, no struggling work of reform, ever went down when the Son of God had set his divine foot within it. Let the storms rage, if God sends them. Christ can

pilot you through. Let the midnight hours of darkness come, if Jesus only comes through them with the hailing signal, IT IS I! There may be a night coming soon on some of you, when heart and flesh shall fail you, and the only shore ahead is the shore of eternity. If Jesus is only in the bark, be not afraid. Like glorious John Wesley, you will be able to cry aloud in the dying hour, "Best of all, Christ is with me! best of all, Christ is with me!"

II. I wish to bring home the teachings of this inspiring scene on Galilee to those who are in a mid-sea of convictions of sin and troublings of conscience. The storm of divine threatenings against sin is breaking upon you. You acknowledge that you are guilty, and you hear the rumbling thunder of that divine declaration, "The soul that sinneth shall die." Alarming passages from God's Word foam up around your distressed and anxious soul. You cannot quell this storm, or escape out of it. Toiling at the oars of self-righteousness has not sent you a furlong nearer to the "desired haven." You have found by sore experience

that sin gives no rest, and that your oars are no match against God's just and broken Law.

Friend, give me your ear! Listen! There is a voice that comes sounding through the storm. Hearken to it! It is a voice of infinite love. "*It is I!*" What voice is that? It is the same voice that spoke Galilee into a calm; that said to Jairus's dead daughter, *Maiden, arise!* that awoke Lazarus from the rocky sepulchre of Bethany; the same voice that sweetly said to a praying penitent, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." That omnipotent voice says to you, "Be of good cheer; it is I!" It is I, who am one with the Father. It is I, who so loved you that I gave myself for you. It is I, who came into the world to seek and to save the lost. My blood cleanseth from all sin. I am able to save to the uttermost. Whosoever believeth in me shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life.

Troubled sinner, let me assure you of this one thing! If you will only admit this waiting, willing, loving Jesus into your tempest-tost soul, the "wind will cease." All will be

well. Christ can allay the storm. Receive him. Christ can take away your guilt. Receive him. Christ can forgive you. Receive him. Open your whole soul to him in penitent, humble faith; welcome him with grateful trust; do all he asks; surrender the helm to him; and you can then feel as the rescued disciples did when they knelt down in the drenched bottom of their little boat, and cried out, "Truly thou art the Son of God!"

An intelligent merchant friend of mine, who was once in a night-storm of anxiety and haunted by the terrors of a guilty conscience, writes as follows: —

"I have a right to speak about faith in Christ. Well, I have tried him these thirty years; and I assure you that, though I once felt as you feel, and feared as you fear, my doubts and fears were given to the winds from the hour I gave my confidence to Christ. I heard his gentle entreaty, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;' and I came. I heard his invitation, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and

I will give you rest.' I came, and he gave me rest and peace, and joys innumerable and immeasurable, in comparison with which all that I had ever known before was but the bubble which bursts when you seek to grasp it. All this he will do for you. He longs to do it; but first he must have your submission and trust: this is the unalterable condition."

All that this merchant did was to recognize Christ and receive Christ. As soon as Jesus came into his soul, the wind ceased. The clouds broke away. And now he is going joyfully on his life-voyage with Jesus in the vessel. So may you, if you will cry, —

"Jesus! Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll,
While the tempest still is high:
Hide me, oh! my Saviour, hide
Till the storm of life is past,
Safe into the haven guide,
Oh! receive my soul at last!"

THE JEWELS IN THE CUP.

THERE was a fine touch of poetry as well as of Christian philosophy in the cheerful words of a young servant of Christ who was near his last hour. "When I have the most pain in my body," said he, "I have the most peace in my soul. I do not doubt but that there is love in the bottom of the cup, though it is terribly bitter in the mouth." It was at the *bottom* of the cup that God had placed the precious blessing; and it was needful that he drink the whole bitter draught in order to reach it.

"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" This was the submissive utterance of the Man of Sorrows in Gethsemane. Thousands of his followers have faltered out the same words through their

tears, when a heart-breaking trial was trying their faith to the utmost. But the "sweet breath of Jesus has been on the cup," and made it more palatable. And the lips that tasted the draught of sorrow have uttered such prayers as they had not made, and could not make in seasons of prosperity.

The richest jewels of grace often lie at the bottom of sorrow's cup. Jesus could not push from Him the bitter agony of Calvary: redemption was at the bottom of that cup. He could not save Himself and yet save a guilty world of sinners. Either He must drink the cup of suffering, or we must drink "the wine of the wrath of God."

Looking down into the draught of sorrow which God mingles often for His children, what precious jewels glisten in the depths! Promises are there, sparkling like pearls. "As thy day so shall thy strength be." "Whom I love, I chasten." "My grace is sufficient for thee." What afflicted child of God would fling from him a cup which contains such priceless gifts as these?

Graces sparkle too in the goblet of grief which Divine love mingles for those who are to become more "perfect through suffering." How lustrous shines the grace of Patience! I used to go occasionally, and read the Bible to an invalid who had been tortured for forty years with excruciating pains; and her sweet words of submission were the *commentary*. I used to go home ashamed of my own impatience under paltry vexations. She never asked God to take her cup of suffering from her: in it were her jewels, — patience, meekness, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Experience of the love of Jesus is another of the pearls dropped into the draught which is mingled for his chosen ones. Christ has his *choice* ones. Dr. Arnot says that the true meaning of the text "many are called, but few are chosen," is this, — "many are called to be Christians, but only a few are *choice*." Only a portion of all the flock are "called and *choice* and faithful." This is certainly a truth, — whether it be the true meaning of the Bible text or not.

These *choice* Christians are often chosen for affliction, and become more choice, and excellent through the regimen of severe trial. There is an experience of the love of Jesus which they gain in their hours of bereavement, or poverty, or hardships, which they never could have acquired in any other way. The "love in the bottom of the cup" was only to be reached by drinking the sorrows which held the jewel. The school of suffering graduates rare scholars. To the disciples in that school it is often given to "know the love of Jesus which passeth knowledge." Suffering Christian! be not in haste to quit thy Master's school; thou art fitting for the *High School* of Heaven. Push not away peevishly thy cup of sorrow; for the sparkling diamond of Christ's love for thee is in the draught he gives thee to drink.

WHERE IS YOUR PLACE?

A PLACE for every man, and every man in his place! This motto is as good for Christ's Church as it was for the army during the war. But what is every Christian's right place?

We answer that it is the one for which God made him, and for which the Holy Spirit converted him. To mistake it is a sad blunder; to desert it is a disgrace. The Bible acknowledges that God made His servants for some especial "niche;" for it says, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given us, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth on teaching; or he that exhorteth on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheer-

fulness." The principle here laid down is that every man or woman who loves Jesus should select and should fill that post of duty for which his or her gifts have fitted them. But "let no man neglect the gift that is in him."

Some men — like Spurgeon and Newman Hall and Bishop Simpson — were created for the pulpit. God gave them clear heads, warm hearts, strong lungs and eloquent tongues, and a hunger for saving souls. To possess such gifts is a clear call to the ministry. And thousands of humbler preachers who cannot attract Spurgeon's crowds are yet as clearly called to the ministry of the Word as the London Boanerges was himself. But the vainglorious creature who cannot attract an audience except by sensational "clap-trap," or by Barnum-ish advertisements, was certainly never called of God to the sacred ministry. He may draw auditors; but he commonly draws them away from places where they would be more profited.

Suppose a man or woman feel — after deep

prayer and self-examination — that God has not called them to the pulpit; what then? Must they be silent? Are all the speaking gifts of the pious lawyer, or doctor, or merchant, or mechanic to run to waste? No, verily! Let such proclaim the glad tidings of Christ, and the story of their own Christian experience in the prayer-meeting, or the mission-school, or the cottage conference meeting, or wherever they can find souls to plead with. How successfully this lay-labor may be made, let such men as Harlan Page and Richard Weaver and George H. Stuart and D. L. Moody and John Wanamaker bear witness. Let the powerful lay-preaching heard every day in "Fulton Street" answer. Some of the best discourses I have ever heard were but five or ten minutes long, and were delivered in my own prayer-meeting. Christian lawyers ought to do more of this tongue-work. As a class, they are too silent in our meetings and Sunday schools. God is opening a wide field for laymen to act on "picket-duty" and as skirmishers and sharp-shooters in the spiritual warfare.

What our churches most need (next to the baptism of the Holy Ghost) is the development of all the members. So much is thrown upon the ministry that some of us can hardly catch a spare hour for our own family and fireside. The Spurgeons and John Halls and Guthries are being ground to death by overwork. A city pastor is often expected to prepare three sermons or lectures, to visit the flock, to see the sick, to bury the dead, and to act on a dozen committees and to make two or three speeches all in a single week! The church becomes Dr. Tyng's church, or Mr. Beecher's church, or Dr. Crosby's church, or some other man's church, — instead of being the people's church, with some gifted man as its overseer and pastor.

Now I love to work exceedingly; but not one whit more than I love to see my congregation work. And no man in my flock has any more right to turn his spiritual work over upon me than he has a right to send me to market for him, or to cook or eat his dinner for him. He needs his work as much as I

need mine. In revival-times the whole church is alive and busy. But where and when did the Master ever give a "furlough" to three-fourths of our people to quit the ranks just as soon as a revival-campaign is over?

A Christian who is keen for work will soon find his place. If he is "apt to teach," he or she will soon gather the Sabbath-school class, and will be there, Bible in hand, every Sunday, even though the rain is spattering on the pavements. Commend me to the teacher who wears a "water-proof," and always consults conscience sooner than the barometer!

Whoever has the gift of song should join God's great choir, and sing at every religious service. The owner of a good voice must give account for that voice at the day of judgment. We never shall have genuine congregational singing until every redeemed child of Christ sings from duty, and consecrates the gift of music to the Lord. Those who expect to sing in heaven had better practise here.

Tract-distribution is going too much out of fashion. It is a blessed and heaven-honored

agency for doing good. Every one who has some spare time and a tongue and a little pious tact can go out with a bundle of tracts to the abodes of ignorance and irreligion.

Those who cannot exhort or teach in a Sunday school, or distribute tracts, can at least live for Jesus at home, and come and join in the prayers of the prayer-meeting. The oldest, the timidest, the least gifted can do surely as much as this. Every one, too, can give something when the contribution-box is passed. The gift of a "cup of cold water" in Christ's name has its reward. Every one whom Jesus saves has a place assigned to them in the vineyard. An idle Christian is a monster!

Friend! have you found your place?

CHRIST A SERVANT.

THERE is one character in which Christians too seldom think of their Divine Redeemer. It is that of a disinterested SERVANT, ever serving our highest interests. We call ourselves Christ's servants. Do we constantly think of him as ours?

At the last supper, we read that Jesus rose from the table and laid aside his robe. He takes a towel, and girds himself after the manner of an attendant in a guest chamber. Pouring water into a basin, he washes the disciples' feet, and wipes them with the towel wherewith he is girded. After the surprising act of self-humiliation is over, he says to them, "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord; ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed

your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done unto you."

Then he tells his disciples for what paltry distinctions the Gentiles and the worldlings crave. But *they* were to aim at a nobler, sublimer supremacy, — the supremacy of disinterested love, and devotion to the wants of others. "Let him who would be chiefest among you become *servant of all.*" The feet of his followers were scarcely dry from the washing he had given them, as he says, "I am among you as *he that serveth.*"

Run your eye, my brother, over the whole earthly career of our blessed Lord, and you will find in it a beautiful illustration of the truth that the loftiest post of honor is the lowliest post of service. Every word, every act, is inspired by disinterested love. He condescends to teach the most ignorant, for they have the deepest need of light. He condescends to feed the hungry poor out of his miraculous basket. He condescends to sit at meat with despised publicans, to heal way-

side beggars and outcast lepers, the children of poor, heart-broken mothers, and the servants in noblemen's kitchens. More than one fallen woman, whom most parents would have thrust out of doors, he allows to come into the sunshine of his presence, and does not let them go until they are penitent and pardoned. And so all through that three years' pilgrimage of love, — instructing the benighted, comforting the afflicted, pardoning the guilty, healing the sick, stooping to wash disciples' feet and to cleanse their still more polluted hearts, — Jesus is everywhere the "servant of all." The years of penitent, self-denying service culminate in the grandest, most stupendous, and sublime service of all, — the service of suffering on the cross of Calvary! Oh! self-indulgent Christian, who art unwilling to lift a finger to relieve a fellow-being or undo his burthen, look on the wondrous spectacle of an incarnate God stooping to the lowliest offices of love, — bearing poverty, and ignominy, and toil, — bearing the curse of the broken law, — bearing your sins in his bleeding body on the cross, — look

at this, and hide your selfish head in shame!

Nor did the service of our Divine servant end with the cross and the new tomb in the garden. When he ascended to heaven, he only ascended to new departments of service for us. He ever liveth there to make intercession for his people. He is our "friend at court." He is our advocate to plead our suit. He hears our complaints, and gives a ready ear to the faintest prayer which the feeblest faith breathes forth in its closet.

Does he not gird himself as with a towel, to wash away our impurities? Not once only, but constantly. One cleansing of a soul at the time of regeneration will no more keep a Christian for ever pure than a single ablution of his face or form would make his body clean for a life-time. The world soils our souls every day. Each unholy thought, each angry word, each act of deceit, each covetous touch of gold, each insincere, unbelieving prayer, each cowardly desertion of duty, leaves an ugly spot. "Create in me a clean heart" is an

every hour's prayer for a Christian's whole life. And he who girded a towel about him, and washed his disciples' feet from the dust of Jerusalem's streets, is ever beside us, ready to wash away the moral defilement which our daily walk on the world's highways brings upon our souls.

How many other services, too, our Saviour is rendering us! When starved on husks, he gives us the bread of life. When faint in spirit, he brings us into his orchard, whose apples of delight cause our lips to sing. Many an obscure saint in a smoky hovel has yet dwelt in the King's banqueting-house. The holy Rutherford, when in prison for Christ's sake, testifies that his prison-cell was "the King's wine-cellar" to his thirsty soul, in which every taste of the divine love only made him more hungry for the "supper-time" in heaven. He says, "I get sweet *tastings* of my Lord's comforts; but the cause of that is not that our steward, Christ Jesus, is niggard and narrow-hearted, but because our stomachs are so weak, and our souls are narrow; but

the great feast is coming, when our hearts shall be enlarged to take in the fulness of the marriage supper of the Lamb."

Time would fail us to tell in how many ways the loving Jesus serves his people, — as their physician, their protector, and their guide through the valley of the death-shade. And one of the great practical teachings of Christ's sublime, self-denying service for us is that the lowliest post of service is the loftiest post of honor. If Jesus was a servant, who shall be ashamed to serve?

Why is it that so many professed Christians "feel above" undertaking humble work for God and humanity? We have heard of a minister of Christ complaining that his station was "beneath his talents"! As if the soul of a beggar were beneath the genius of a Paul! Some are unwilling to enter a mission-school, or to distribute tracts through a poor district, strangely forgetting that their Divine Master was himself a missionary.

Have such never learned that the towel wherewith Jesus wiped his disciples' feet out-

shone the purple that wrapped Cæsar's limbs? Do they not know that the post of honor is the post of service? "My seat in the Sunday school is higher than my seat in the Senate," said an eminent Christian statesman. When we take the lowliest place of sacred service, we find ourselves in the best society, — in the society of mothers serving their children, of patriots serving their country, of pastors serving their flocks, and of ONE who is ever the gracious servant of his people. Heaven is but a higher sphere of service. For in that realm of unwearying activity and blissful worship we read that "they *serve God* day and night in his temple; his name is written on their foreheads;" and "they follow the Lamb whereso-ever he goeth, and he leadeth them to living fountains of water."

THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS.

THE most successful toilers are those who know best how to serve God in "small things." The Almighty never "despises the day of small things," or else he would not put his mighty oaks into acorns, or his golden grain-crops into little seed-bags.

1. Nearly all the greatest and best things had their feeble beginnings. The Mississippi begins as a rivulet; the splendid suspension bridge at Niagara first went over the deep chasm as a mere kite-string. And the noblest, holiest Christian lives had their origin in some word faithfully spoken, or in the reading of a tract, or the offering of a broken and brief prayer, or in a solemn resolution to quit favorite sins and yield to Jesus. One sentence seems to have brought Peter and John to fol-

low Christ. One sentence converted the jailer of Philippi. Now if every Christian life sprouted out of the act of a single hour, and was probably the result of some humble agency, then it is a sin and a folly to "despise the day of small things."

Cases to illustrate this truth thicken in our memory. A godly woman spoke kindly to her maid-servant about her soul: the gardener overheard the conversation through a hedge, and was himself convicted of his sins. Stray arrows often hit the mark.

The late Dr. William Wisner once stopped on a hot summer day at a Berkshire farm-house for a glass of water. He talked faithfully with the young lady who gave him the refreshing draught, and directed her to the "living water." Long years afterwards, a middle-aged woman introduced herself to Dr. W—— on a steamboat, and thanked him for the plain, kind word that brought her to the Saviour.

Harlan Page, coming early to a meeting, found a stranger sitting there, and politely

spoke to him. The conversation went on until the man — who said that "Christians had always kept him *at arm's length*" before — was melted into penitence.

On the last day of the year 1867, I met a man of fifty in the streets, and said to him, "Had not you and I better begin the new year with a new life?" That simple remark set him to thinking, and resulted in his conversion.

The lesson of all these cases, and of innumerable others like them, is that the most effectual way to save sinners is to *use the day of small things*, and seize our opportunities. Nearly all revivals start with a single man or woman. One live coal can kindle a great flame.

2. There is another view of this matter. As the usefulness of a Christian grows out of little deeds well done, so the influence of many Christians is terribly poisoned by little sins. Alas! how great sinners we may be in small things! Little irritations of look and manner; little meannesses in our daily dealings;

little fibs and insincerities of speech; little jealousies and spites; little neglects of kind acts we might do, — all these are the "little foxes" that have spoiled many a goodly vine. Pile up enough tiny snow-flakes on a rail-way track, and they will blockade the most powerful locomotive. So I verily believe that the *aggregate sum* of Christians' daily inconsistencies and neglects of duty often block up a revival, and stay the progress of Christ's kingdom. Jesus Christ laid great emphasis on "keeping the least of his commandments." That was an awfully mischievous spark that lighted Chicago into a blaze; but it *was* once only a spark!

3. This brings me to say to the unconverted, It is a fatal mistake to think that any wilful sin is a trifle. If you are lost, my dear friend, it is not likely that one huge crime like Judas', or Pilate's, or Ananias', will sink you to perdition. It will be the sum of your daily sins left unrepented of, the aggregate of thousands of offences against God's law and God's love. I pray you, do not say, "Oh, *this* is not

much!" No sin is a trifle. No sin is harmless. In Sudbrook Park, England, a naturalist saw a small worm boring into the bark of a stately sycamore-tree. "If that worm is *let alone*," said he, "it will kill the tree." The experiment was tried. The next year the leaves turned yellow, and the year after the tree was a skeleton. Now if one sin is so deadly, what must a lifetime of sin be?

My last thought is that life is a series of steps. Each step counts. Coming to Jesus is a single step. It may be the work of a moment. It may turn on a small pivot. And you will never come to Christ, or never reach heaven, while you continue to "despise the day of small things."

THE SUCCESSFUL PASTOR.

"THE sermon always sounds better to me on Sunday when I have had a shake of my minister's hand during the week." This was a very natural remark of a very sensible parishioner. We always listen with a more open-hearted readiness to every thing which falls from the lips of one who has won our friendship or showed us a grateful attention. Even the instructions from God's Word, and the precious invitations of the gospel, come more acceptably from one we love than from him who treats us with indifference or neglect. After all, the great power of a good pastor over his people is *heart-power*. Intellectual brilliancy may awaken the pride of a congregation in their minister; but it is his affectionate sympathy and personal kindnesses to them

that awaken their love for him and keep it burning.

When a pastor has gained a strong hold on the affections of his people, he may preach ever so pointedly against popular sins, and the people will receive his unpalatable truths without flinching, or hurling a reproach at him. On the other hand, we have known fearless denouncers of wrong-doing to be ousted from their pulpits, simply because the radical thunderers had no *grip* on the affections of their flock. The sermon against rum-drinking or dishonesty was a mere pretext for blackballing him: the secret reason was that they did not love the man. Conscience sometimes requires a faithful ambassador of Christ to put a severe strain on the "tether" that binds him to his pastorate: at such times it is a happy thing for him if that tether is securely fastened to a hundred family-altars and firesides. The great mass of the ministry are not men of genius; and, even if they were, they could not afford to dispense with that heart-power which can only be acquired by personal kindness and sympathy with their people.

We could name a certain successful pastor who for a quarter of a century has kept his church full and prosperous: he has sided with most of the moral reforms of the day, and his vineyard has been irrigated with many a copious revival-shower. Yet he never could be accused of brilliant talents or profound learning. He has, in their stead, a warm heart, good sense, tact, winning manners, and fervent piety. He is not a powerful preacher, but he *is* a powerful pastor. He knows where all his congregation live, and he visits them. He never comes as a stranger or in a ceremonious manner; if the parlor is cold, or locked up for repairs, he drops into the nursery, takes a youngster on his lap, chats with the mother, inquires about the spiritual welfare of the family, and probably offers a fervent prayer with them before he departs. That family are pretty certain to be at church on the next Sunday. If a business man in his congregation has met with a reverse, he calls in at his counting-room, gives him a warm shake of the hand and a kind word of encour-

agement. The unfortunate merchant *feels* the warm pressure of that hand the next time he goes to church: he is ready to put into that hand the key to his own heart.

If there is a sick child in the flock, the pastor is kneeling beside its little crib; if there is a bit of crape hanging at the door-knob, the pastor is quite sure to be found amid the weeping family within. At every pastoral visit he makes he weaves a new strand into the cord of love that binds that household to him and to the sanctuary. Such a pastor bases the pulpit on the hearts of his people; and all the mischief-making *Guy Fawkses* in the parish cannot put enough powder-kegs of discontent under that pulpit to "blow out" the incumbent.

It may be said that all this pastoral visitation consumes a vast amount of time. So it does; but it can generally be made in the afternoon, while the morning is devoted to study. And the minister is studying *human nature* at every visit: is not this next in importance to a knowledge of God's Word? It is idle for any

pastor to plead that his flock is too large for him to visit them. The writer of this paragraph has over three hundred pews in his church, — every one of them rented, to the last sitting, — and he finds no difficulty in reaching every family, at least once in each year. The very exercise of walking from house to house is a life-preserver. Every visit gives an observant pastor some information that he wants, and some new materials for a sermon. It would be a great mercy to many a minister, — and to his people, — if he could be dragged out of his books, and be brought into personal contact with every-day life.

There is about one minister in every generation who is so situated that he cannot possibly be a visitant of his flock. Charles H. Spurgeon is such an one. With a congregation of five thousand souls, and a membership of over three thousand, with the charge of a theological school, the editorship of a religious magazine, and the oversight of a dozen mission stations, he cannot be expected to visit six or seven hundred families. Spurgeon is the hun-

dred-handed Briareus of the modern pulpit; but the visitation of his immense flock he necessarily leaves to his board of elders. When he does encounter his parishioners, he is said to be very cordial and affable.

Many arguments might be urged in favor of regular and systematic pastoral visitation on the part of every Christian minister. For what is the real object and end of a minister's office? Is it simply to preach sermons? No! It is to *Christianize and save immortal souls.* It is to edify Christ's Church, to purify society, to fight sin, to lead souls to Jesus. Preaching sermons is *one* of the means to this end. It is, indeed, a chief and indispensable agency. But if a pastor can prepare more practical sermons, and can lodge those sermons more effectually in the hearts of his auditors, by constant pastoral intercourse with them, then is he morally bound to keep up that intercourse. The mass of sinful men are only to be reached through their affections. Sympathy is power. Christ Jesus did not win Zaccheus the publican, by argument. He simply went

to his house, and won him by a divine sympathy. Methinks, as I close this article, I hear some good, plain, humble "fisher of souls" whisper to me, "Brother C——, I thank you for your words of cheer. My Master never trusted me with ten talents; but he gave me one talent in my *heart.* I cannot be a Spurgeon; but I can go out and love somebody into the sphere of the gospel. With God's help, I may become a successful PASTOR."

THE PLAINT OF A MINISTER'S DOOR-BELL.

I AM that much-used and long-suffering article, a minister's door-bell. As I have a very distinct voice, and often address the people within doors, let me say a gentle word or two to the multitudes of "outsiders." I have a few hints to give, and a word to the wise ought to be sufficient. (The trouble is that the *wise* are not as numerous as the *otherwise.*)

My first hint is, Don't call on my master in the morning, unless it be on a matter of the most vital importance, or in regard to somebody's spiritual welfare. The morning is a student's golden hour. My master is a student of God's Word, and whoever robs him of his morning robs his congregation of the bread and the water of life. If you must come dur-

ing his precious season of brain-work, pray *be short;* and, when you are done, then (as Dr. Cox once phrased it) "make rectilineals" for the door! But how do you know but your five minutes' interruption has frightened away a whole flock of admirable thoughts which were just about alighting on his page? You may have well-nigh spoiled a day's work.

Just let me tell you into what scrapes I got the good man yesterday. It was Tuesday, which is always a minister's best day for study. He rests on Monday, and then lays the keel of his sermon on Tuesday morning; for he don't believe in burning out his brains and heart over a lamp on Saturday night. (None but fools or sluggards make sermons on Saturday nights.) Well, yesterday morning I had the St. Vitus' dance. First came a book-agent. He said he *must* see the minister, because he "had a work to sell that no minister's library should be without." He pushed his way in, and pestered my master for half an hour, until the poor man bought the book, for the same reason that the girl

married her importunate suitor, — "just to get rid of him." After him came a big burly brother from Nebraska, who said he was "*bound* to raise the money to pay off their church debt, and two hundred dollars more to top off their preacher's salary." I wanted to hint to him that he had better call on the secretary of the Church Erection Board about the one, and on the treasurer of the Board of Home Missions about the other. In he went; and as the door opened, I heard him shout out in genuine Western style: "Well, Doctor, how are ye? I am *bound* to call on all the ministers in town, and I thought I'd begin with you." The Nebraska brother sat in "executive session" with my long-suffering lord, and then came out with the frank apology, "I am sorry to take so much of your time." So was the minister.

Now that honest stranger had a perfect right to raise the money for his prairie church; but he ought to have gone right to the officer of the church societies, whose *business* it is to hear and to answer such appli-

cations. Every well-regulated city church takes up a large collection for the treasury of its church erection and home missionary boards; and to that treasury the applicant should go, and not badger the over-worked pastor to make out a list of his parishioners to be called on for extra donations.

After the exodus of the genial "son of the soil," there came up a slender, sharp-visaged lady, with a pair of gold "specks" over her hungry eyes, and a "ridicule" on her arm. She gave me a tweak, and then she bolted in. It is hard work to refuse a woman; and has been so ever since Adam said *yes* to Eve when he ought to have said *no*. So the minister blandly said, "What can I do for you, madam?" She told him that, like her Master, she was going about doing good. She was the first directress of the "Hospital for Total Incurables." After giving several touching cases of hopeless efforts for helpless victims, she finally asked him if he could not prepare and deliver a gratuitous lecture for the benefit of the said hospital! She said that she had *tried* Mr.

Beecher, and Mr. Gough, and Mr. Chapin, and Dr. A——, and Mr. B——; and now she would *try* him. The poor man was *tried* with a vengeance. He rose presently and said: "Madam, I am holding meetings every night. I never lecture. Please accept these five dollars for your institution. Good-morning!" As he bowed her out, I saw that his face was flushed; but just then a man came up with a bundle of papers, and said that he "only wanted the Doctor to look over these testimonials, and to give him a letter of recommendation to the collector of the port!" This was the drop too much. It was now twelve o'clock, and not a line on the sermon. My master (I am afraid) did not order his speech very delicately when he said: "Good friend, this is not the Custom house!" and closed the door. The morning was gone. And with it the sermon. Next Sunday I'll warrant you that somebody will come out of church and mutter, "Well, the Doctor wasn't *quite up to the mark* this morning."

Now pray don't think my master is a churl.

He is a kind, forbearing, hard-toiling servant of Christ. He only asks that, while he is *doing his people's work*, and preparing their discourse, he may not be plundered of his precious time. His congregation have their rights also; and he will not consent to cheat them out of their gospel food. While he is absorbed in his studies, pray do not intrude with irrelevant matters; and, if you do come, *be short.* Give him his morning hours. He is seeking God's truth to save immortal souls. Is not that of more importance than listening to the tedious talk of importunate intruders?

But there is one class of visitors whom my master *always* welcomes, even in his busiest moments of study. He loves to see every man, woman, or child, rich or poor, who comes to him for spiritual counsel, for prayer, for help, or to help him do his Saviour's work. The other day, when the Widow B—— came to tell him of her son's conversion, he followed her to the door; and, with tears in his eyes, he said: "God bless you, Mother B——! You have *helped me* make my sermon this

morning." I have seen him close his books to go off with a poor child to the "Home for the Friendless." He is always ready to talk with people about their souls, or to do any thing which belongs to him as a workman consecrated to his MASTER'S work. For the sick, the sinning, the dying, the bereaved, he has an open ear and an open heart. But he is too busy to be bored with what does not belong to him.

Remember that the owner of this house has not long to live. He has no time for trifles. The door is *always open* to the sad, the sorrowing, the seekers after Jesus. We ministers' door-bells are often pulled by trembling hands. But to the new-come youth, who is a stranger in this great city, to the needy, to the applicant for religious instruction, to the seeker for spiritual aid, this little door-bell always whispers, "Come and welcome!"

STRENGTHENING A PASTOR'S HANDS.

"And Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the wood, and strengthened his hands in God." — 1 Sam. xxiii. 16.

A BEAUTIFUL friendship was that which warmed the heart of the tyrant's son towards David the hunted fugitive; it was a "love passing the love of woman." Jonathan went on no sentimental errand of romantic affection, but from a lofty sense of duty, to strengthen the faith and to cheer the spirit of the noblest servant of God then living. David had a mighty work to do for Jehovah. When the faithful Jonathan went out to strengthen his hands in God, it was that those hands might yet hold Israel's sceptre, and might pen the matchless psalms, and might protect the ark of the Lord. We can imagine these godly

brothers kneeling down together amid the thickets of Ziph, and pouring out their hearts to Him who was their "refuge and stronghold in the time of trouble."

That was probably the last time that these twin-spirits ever met on earth. The black surge of civil war soon rolled between them; and in a few weeks the mangled form of Jonathan was picked up on the bloody field of Gilboa. It must have been a sadly precious thought to David, that the last time he ever saw his friend was when he came, at the risk of life, to *strengthen his hands in God.*

Now, every true pastor is "anointed of the Lord," as David was, to do a holy work. When his hands hang down through discouragement, or when he is in a "thick-wood" of troubles, and his work lags or fails utterly for want of helpers, then is the time when he needs the Jonathans. Paul found his in that noble committee who came down from Rome to Apii Forum, and gave him such a recep tion that he "thanked God, and took courage." How many a minister is to-day crippled

in his work and well-nigh crushed in spirit, just for the want of hearty, sympathetic, godly supporters. He can afford to wear a threadbare coat, and to go hungry for books, better than he can to "spend his strength for naught." He can stand an empty purse better than an empty prayer-meeting.

How shall I strengthen the hands of *my* pastor? cries some reader whose conscience is suddenly smitten within him. You can do it in many ways. Go, and give him your hand and heart. Talk over the affairs of your church (yours as much as his); help him to lay plans of usefulness, and then help him to push them forward. It is just as much your duty to work for the Master as it is your minister's duty.

Perhaps your pastor has been often disheartened by the emptiness of your pew on the Sabbath. He prepared carefully more than one sermon especially for you; but you were not there to hear it; so both suffered from your absence. For one, I confess that I never yet preached a sermon loud enough to

awaken a parishioner who was dozing away the day at home, or sauntering off to other churches. If a good reason keep you from your pew, send a substitute; invite some church-neglecting friend to go and occupy your place. Perhaps the sermon may save his soul.

When a discourse is adapted to the spiritual condition of your husband, your wife, your son, or other one dear to you, *follow it up* with prayer and with personal efforts for that friend's salvation. While your pastor is endeavoring to draw your unconverted friend to Christ, pray don't pull the other way. The backward pull of your unkind criticisms, or your inconsistent conduct, will avail more than the forward drawing of his sermon. If one of your family comes home from the sanctuary tender and thoughtful, try to deepen their impressions. Your pastor is drawing: draw with him. Strengthen his hands in God. We could name certain Sunday-school teachers who always bring the awakened inquirers in their classes immediately to their pastor for conversa-

tion: in those classes conversions are frequent, because they are looked for, and labored for too. Oh for more such Jonathans!

It is a happy thing to have even one worker in our churches. But it is far better to have an hundred. Aaron and Hur answered very well to stay up Moses' hands for a few brief hours; but what if our "Aaron" is sick, and our "Hur" is out of town? Who then shall stay up the arms that hang down for want of help? We don't call that a thrifty apple-tree which bears all its fruit on one limb: neither is that a thrifty church in which half-a-dozen persons do all the praying and all the working. Let *every* hand, even the youngest or the feeblest, be stretched forth to help the ambassador of Christ, and a revival is already begun.

Finally, the power your minister most needs is the power from on high. This comes through prayer. Peter's eloquent sermon on the day of Pentecost was pioneered by the rousing prayer-meeting in the "upper-chamber," and three thousand souls were converted

before sunset. What the steam-cylinder is to the engine, that is the prayer-meeting to the Church. There let the life, the heat, the power be engendered. And when the place of prayer is thronged by fervid importunate souls, then how gloriously are the pastor's hands *strengthened in God!*

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS IN THE PULPIT.*

THERE are stages and halting-places in a man's journey of life, — such as Bunyan's Pilgrim reached at the Wicket Gate and the House Beautiful and the Delectable Mountains. One such point of retrospection a minister reaches when he has finished a quarter of a century in the pulpit. He feels like sitting down for a moment, and gazing backward over the long highway, and like entering a few serious thoughts in the diary of his existence. The writer of this paragraph has come to the "silver wedding" of his ministry.

Eleven years have passed since we spent our first Sabbath with the Lafayette-avenue Church. It then numbered one hundred and forty members. To-day it has on its roll fourteen hun-

* Written in April, 1871.

dred and three. The number of admissions by profession of faith has been smaller than in previous years. They number but forty-two. In the most successful year (1866) there were three hundred and thirty additions; nearly all on confession of faith in a new-found Saviour.

Twenty-five years ago to-day we preached our "maiden" discourse, before a congregation of solid and somewhat somnolent farmers, in the little hamlet of Clover Hill, New Jersey. It was our first attempt with a manuscript; and, whether from excessive fatigues during the previous week or under the sermon, several of the audience — like the *first* farmer in Eden — fell "into a deep sleep." We then learned that every written sermon needs the frequent *spur* of a spirited extempore passage.

Before that first year closed we were domesticated in our work in a small congregation in quiet Burlington, at that time the residence of the pious, kingly-hearted Dr. Cortland Van Rensselaer, and of Bishop Doane, who was famous for his High Churchism, and his "shovel-hat." In that little parish of Burling-

ton we tasted the joys of our first revival. It was like an encamping at Elim under the threescore and ten palm-trees, and beside the twelve wells of water. A call from Trenton, the capital of the State, to gather a new congregation, took us thither in the autumn of 1849. A new edifice was reared, and from it a colony has since "swarmed out" to form still another congregation. It is a matter of profound joy to us to have been permitted to oversee the erection of three church edifices for the worship of Jehovah. God grant that the walls of those structures may glitter in the light of the millennial morning!

After our ministry in Trenton came a *détour* of seven years through the quiet domains of our Dutch Reformed neighbors in New York. Happy years those were, too, in old Market Street, with gracious showers in the golden year of 1858. We left our Dutch kinsfolk with pleasant memories, and without ever having learned to smoke a pipe, or being contaminated with any dangerous degree of conservatism. In 1860 we crossed the ferry to

Brooklyn; and during the next year the foundations of Lafayette-avenue Church edifice were laid, amid the roar of Fort Sumter's guns. The flag that celebrated the triumph of freedom floated afterwards from its towers. The building then stood almost on the edge of Brooklyn: it is now about at the centre.

These five and twenty years have been spent in unbroken labor, each day rounded with sound honest *sleep*. We count it a subject for devout thankfulness that we have never been kept from the pulpit by sickness, except on one single Sabbath! If any ministerial brother who believes in using a little ale or port wine "for his stomach's sake" has done better than that, we should be happy to form his acquaintance. Sleep is worth more than all the stimulants in the universe. During this quarter of a century we have preached about four thousand times, and made about as many public addresses. We have been permitted to receive 2,527 persons into church-fellowship, of whom twelve hundred united on profession of faith.

But if we were called on to decide between the spiritual results of labors with the tongue and labors with the pen, we might give the preference to the latter. During our whole ministry we have made it a rule never to let a week pass without at least one article of a moral or religious character — long or short — being sent to the press. These articles number about thirteen hundred. Their circulation in Great Britain and Canada has been almost as general as in the United States. We have made a proximate calculation of the number of copies printed during these twenty-five years, and find that they amount to over fifty-five millions! If each copy had but a single reader, here were fifty-five millions of opportunities to reach immortal souls! We hope that our readers will pardon this personal allusion: we throw out the fact as a stimulus to our ministerial brethren to make a more liberal use of the pen, and the weekly religious press. All that we have accomplished has been small in comparison with the widely circulated writings of Newman

Hall, Spurgeon, and the pastor of Plymouth Church.

Looking back to-day to the starting-point of our ministerial life, we are amazed at the changes which this quarter of a century has witnessed. When we began our work the Mexican war was just opening; and California had not yet yielded up her golden secret to mankind. The magnetic telegraph was in its infancy. But one line of ocean steamers existed on the globe! The statesmanship of America was then chiefly occupied in constructing new guarantees for the peace and perpetuity of the "*peculiar* institution." Thank God! we saw the last bubble rise to the surface to mark where Pharaoh perished with his chariots and horsemen!

Clay, Webster, and Calhoun then led the American forum. Lyman Beecher, Archibald Alexander, Albert Barnes, and Dr. Thornwell were the representative men of our Calvinistic pulpit. That resplendent "star" which now hangs over Brooklyn heights was just rising above the horizon, from an obscure parish in

Indiana. Chalmers was then the foremost pulpit orator on the globe. Spurgeon was but a schoolboy in his eleventh year. Skinner, Cox, Kirk, Bascom, Wayland, and Addison Alexander were in their splendid meridian.

At that day the fresh rupture between the "Old" and "New School" Presbyterianism was ghastly and gaping, — a great ugly wound that threatened to ulcerate. Little did we then dream of occupying a seat in the first *reunited* General Assembly.

So has the past quarter of a century flown by, — "like a tale that is told." At the risk of being charged with egotism we have narrated the meagre story of our small part in its sayings and doings. It has gone with its account into the record-book of the day of Judgment. When the *next* quarter of a century ends, the hand which pens these lines will probably be motionless. Another voice will be heard in yonder pulpit. God grant that both pen and voice may never declare or publish "any thing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified!"

THE WORKING TEMPERANCE CHURCH.

EVERY true and timely moral reform should be born and nursed, and reared and supported by the Church of Jesus Christ. There is not a single moral precept which sinful humanity needs, but the Church should teach it; there is not a wholesome example to be set, but the Church should practise it. That Christian church will be the most *Christlike* which does the most to "seek and to save the lost."

Among all the great moral reforms, none has a stronger claim on Christian men and Christian ministers than the enterprise for saving society from the crime and curse of drunkenness. And intemperance never will be checked, the liquor traffic never will be prohibited, the drinking usages of social life

will never be overthrown until the members of Christ's Church all feel that they are also members of Christ's great Temperance Society. If the Church does not save the world, then the world will sink the Church. And what a burlesque it is to style that church organization a "salt of the earth" which has a trimmer in its pulpit and tipplers in its pews!

Holding these incontrovertible opinions, we earnestly insist that every Christian church which expects to do its whole work must have a *Temperance department* as much as a Sunday school or a missionary department. It must have a machinery to promote total abstinence, just as much as a machinery to promote Bible distribution or Mission-schools, or Sabbath observance. A well-appointed steamer must have not only a good engine in its hull and a good pilot at the wheel, but a good supply of life-preservers in the cabins.

What are some of the essential features of a working Temperance Church?

I. We reply that the first essential is a thorough teetotaller *in its pulpit.* An active

Temperance Church with a wine-bibbing minister is as rare a curiosity as a victorious army with a drunken commander. A zealous teetotaller will not only practise abstinence from intoxicating drinks, but he will *preach* it as a vital part of his gospel-message on the Lord's day. The Bible abounds in Temperance texts; and every community abounds in people who need to hear them. It is the pastor's office to expound the causes and the curse of drunkenness. It is his office to create a Temperance conscience among his congregation. It is his duty to take the lead in arranging and conducting Temperance meetings in his neighborhood.

Not only may a zealous Temperance pastor look for revivals in his flock, but also for a more extended influence among the surrounding world.

A fearless preacher against popular sins commands, in the long-run, the popular ear and the popular heart. Let the career of a Beecher in Brooklyn, a Tyng in New York, a Barnes in Philadelphia, a Kirk in Boston,

and a Hatfield in Chicago testify to this fact. The minister who brings God's Word to bear against the great sins of the time must be heard and will be felt. He may repel a few trimmers and time-servers; he may awaken some bad passions in the self-indulgent and the lovers of their lusts; but he attracts to him the warm-hearted, the philanthropic, the spiritually-minded. Drunkards' wives will persuade their husbands to come and hear him. Mothers will rejoice to place their sons under his faithful ministry. The benevolent will co-operate with such an earnest advocate of Christian reform. The masses love and honor a *bold defender of the right.* It is not the man who drifts with the current of evil, but he who, like the sure-anchored rock, stems the current, that is sure to arrest the popular attention and command the popular heart.

II. Every efficient church should have a well-organized total abstinence society. The title to membership should be the simple signing of the abstinence pledge. We

would recommend, also, that an annual payment of a half-dollar should be made by each member, in order to provide some permanent income for the society. Collections should also be taken up at public meetings; but tickets of admission should seldom be used, because they tend to exclude the very persons who most need the benefit of the lecture. The public meetings of church societies should be held in the church edifice, and as often as *proper* advocates of the cause can be secured to address them. Better no meetings at all than to have the audiences trifled with by a catch-penny buffoon or ranting adventurer. The number of acceptable speakers might be vastly increased if Christian laymen, as well as ministers, would fit themselves for this noble and needed work by studying Temperance books and publications. It is easier to make a good Temperance address than a good political speech; but political speakers are plenty as blackberries.

The best possible music should be provided for all public meetings, and the Pledge should

always be circulated at the close. It is the province of the society to subscribe for and circulate Temperance papers through the congregation. Several times in each year the tracts of the *National Temperance Society* might be distributed in the pews.

Such an organization does not require much "constitution and by-laws," or many officers. A wide-awake president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, and a live board of half dozen "managers," are amply sufficient. Choose your president for his working qualities, and not for his "name." All meetings should be opened with prayer or the reading of God's Word

In Surrey Chapel, London, the celebrated Newman Hall has a Temperance society which has enrolled 8,000 members in fifteen years; 150 reformed inebriates have been received into membership with the church in which Brother Hall is so bold and faithful a spiritual leader. There is also a *Band of Hope*, which enrolls a great number of children.

III. This leads us to say that a working

Temperance Church will lay out no small part of its efforts on the youth of the Sunday school. Here is the point to apply *prevention.* As the Sunday school deals with the beginning of life, it should logically deal with the beginnings of sin. If all our children could be kept from touching the first glass, intemperance would disappear.

In efficient Sunday-school operations, the following are absolutely indispensable : —

Good Temperance books in the library.

A circulation of the *Youth's Temperance Banner*, or some similar paper, among the scholars.

The Total Abstinence Pledge discreetly administered by the teachers.

Frequent and simple addresses to the school on the dangers of tampering with drink, and on the sin and sorrows of the drunkard.

No teacher's breath should ever be flavored by the odors of the wine-glass or the beer-cup.

Total Abstinence should be taught as a

Christian virtue. "Woe unto him who causeth one of these *little ones* to stumble."

IV. Our final recommendation is, that every church-member should make Temperance a part of his daily religion. The bottle is the deadliest foe to Christ in our churches and our communities. A friend of Christ must be the enemy of the bottle. More souls are ruined by the intoxicating cup than by any single vice or error on the globe. Every professed Christian who gives his example to the drinking usages is a partner in the tremendous havoc which those evil customs produce.

"If any man will come *after* ME," said the Divine Master, "let him *deny himself*." And the great Apostle only clenched this glorious precept when he said, "It is good not to drink wine whereby my brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." On this immutable rock of self-denial stands the Temperance reform! There the Divine Founder of Christianity placed it; with Christianity it is linked; with Christianity it will stand or

perish. We do not hesitate to close this brief paper with the declaration that with the triumph and prevalence of Christian *self-denial in the Church* is bound up the only hope of the triumph and prevalence of pure Christianity in our world.

DIGGING FOR WATER.

SOME of the "out-of-the-way" passages in God's Word contain precious teachings, which will repay us for hunting them out and turning them up. There is a rich ore of truth hidden under them. For example, there is an historical incident narrated in the third chapter of the Second Book of Kings which is very seldom noticed. We read that the kings of Judah and of Israel were at war with the heathen armies of Moab. The armies of the Lord were suffering from the want of water. Within the compass of a seven days' journey they cannot find a drop. In their straits they send for God's prophet, Elisha. He becomes God's oracle, and gives them this message from Heaven: "Thus saith the Lord, *make the*

land full of ditches." The word may be better translated *trenches*. How shall they be filled? That is not their concern. It is the duty of faith not to question, but to obey. "For thus saith the Lord, ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet this valley shall be *filled with water*, that ye may drink; both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts." The trenches were dug, and presently the waters began to steal into them from some mysterious, invisible source. It was not an ordinary process of Nature; but a supernatural process, accomplished by the direct agency of God. All the awakening, converting, and quickening power that operates on human souls is really supernatural. Up to a certain point human agency acts, but not one hair's breadth further. "Paul may plant," and there he stops; "Apollos may water," and there he must stop. Then comes in the divine agency, when "God giveth the increase." All that the thirsting Israelites could do, or were asked to do, was simply to dig the trenches. And then a supernatural

power filled them mysteriously with water. There does not appear to have been any Huxley, or Tyndall, or Darwin in the camp, to teach God's people that *supernatural* agencies are never exerted, even for a good object. The simple-hearted Israelites wanted water, and they dug channels for God to pour it in. They prepared for a blessing, and the blessing came.

This is the pithy and practical truth that we find by lifting up this text and looking under it. It is a suggestive one to hundreds of our churches, which have long been languishing in spiritual drought. If we want spiritual blessings, we must dig the trenches to receive them.

The first trench that ought to be opened in some churches is a deep, broad channel of mutual confidence and brotherly love. When Christians grow cold and neglectful of their own duties, they grow censorious toward each other. As love declines, the critical temper increases. All along the eaves of a cold church hang the sharp, piercing icicles of

criticism and censoriousness. Then everybody suffers. The pastor catches his share: his most honest efforts are the most censured. The officers of the church are blamed roundly, and those who happen to be unpopular are made the luckless scapegoats on which to load the failures of the church. Each blames the others; but no one goes down in the dust of contrition and blames himself. Sometimes this censoriousness is born of the very impatience at the want of success. Sometimes good men and women, vexed that things do not go better, fall to hitting right and left their fellow-members, their officers, the pastor getting a blackened eye among the rest. It is as if a rifleman on the battle-field, seeing the fight go badly, quits firing, and takes to battering his comrades with the butt of his rifle. Whereas his own *example*, in just standing firm and taking sure aim at the foe, would do more to restore the battle than all his disorderly assaults on his fellow-soldiers. The charity that "thinketh no evil," and is "not easily provoked," and that "seeketh not her own" (way), is the first

grace to be exercised in many a cold, discordant, fault-finding church. How can Christians expect the outside world to put confidence in them when they put so little confidence in each other? The first duty in such a church is to run a deep, broad trench of cordial charity and brotherly love right through the whole congregation. This trench must be dug by every one *before his own door.*

Another trench to be opened speedily is earnest, penitential *prayer.* This is God's appointed "channel to convey the blessings he designs to give." I sometimes think that there are no equal number of utterances by reputable people in which so many falsehoods are told as in public prayers. Loving words are often spoken by people whose hearts rankle with mean spites and malicious grudges. Sins are glibly confessed in prayer which if anybody else should charge upon the speaker he would grow red in the face with wrath. Words of solemn self-consecration are fluently uttered by persons who are living to themselves, and not to Jesus

Christ. Such prayers are a mockery. They cut no channels for God's blessings. But genuine prayer — born of contrition and soul-thirst, poured out with faith and wrestling importunity — breaks its way up to the Throne of Infinite Love. Such prayer always brings a revival; nay, it is itself a revival.

A third work of preparation for the divine blessing is equally indispensable. It is personal repentance of sin. Not of other people's sins, but of our own. The best draining of a farmer's field is sub-soil drainage. In our churches we need a sub-soil repentance. It must cut deep. It must cut up sin by the root. If the ploughshare run through the flower-beds and melon-patches of our self-indulgence, so much the better. The trench that drains off our sins will be a channel for the sweet, life-giving waters of salvation.

We might mention other trenches that are needed, — such as hard work and liberality in giving for Christ. The wider we cut these channels, the broader and the fuller will be the stream of God's blessings. Thus saith

the Lord to his people, "Make your valley *full of trenches.*" We may "see no wind nor rain." We may hear no sounds of violent excitement. But silently and steadily the tides of spiritual influence will flow into our souls. As the tides rise from the ocean over bare and slimy ground, and lift up the keels of grounded vessels, so shall these blessings of the Holy Spirit flow into our churches. Not by might, not by human power, but "by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

Brethren, this plain-spoken article may reach scores of churches who are so dry that there is "no water within a compass of seven days' journey." God's command to you is to *prepare for blessings*, or they will never come. When your trenches are ready, the currents of spiritual power will flow in. If you want water, *dig for it!*

THE SHEPHERD'S SLING.

A Plea for Foreign Missions.

"Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts." — 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

THAT was a remarkable encounter which once took place in the little valley of Elah. With its thrilling story you are all as familiar as you are with the grapple of American yeomanry on Bunker Hill, or with the dear-bought victory of freedom on the heights of Gettysburg. From our early childhood we have all loved to read the brief epic of David and Goliath. With our childish eyes we distinctly saw the boastful champion of the Philistines plant himself in full view of Israel, and of Israel's heathen foes.

The champion measures six cubits and a span; and every inch of his giant stature is encased in flashing brass. The staff of his

spear is like to a weaver's beam; the head of his spear weighs six hundred shekels of iron. A shield-bearer goes before him. His impious proclamation is: "I defy the armies of Israel this day: give me a man, that we may fight together."

For forty days the heathen's challenge remains unaccepted, and for forty days the heart of Israel is growing weaker than water. At length a shepherd's boy fresh from his flocks, with the ruddy tint of toil on his fair young face, steps modestly forth into the lists. In one hand he carries a staff; in the other he carries a common sling. He has dropped five smooth stones into the shepherd's pouch by his side. These are his only weapons; the protection of God is his only armor. Even so was ruddy-cheeked free labor, fresh from its fields, pitted against the giant of oppression in our late national conflict.

I need not recount to you the bulletin of that battle at Elah, — so short, so sharp, and so decisive. I need not repeat to you modest David's reply to the disdainful champion:

"Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, whom thou hast defied." I need not tell you how the stripling put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slung it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the earth. I need not depict to you the triumphant youth standing on the giant's prostrate carcass, and hewing off his swaggering head; nor the subsequent rout of the heathen before Israel's reassured and victorious armies.

I have brought to you this narrative as a starting-point and an illustration. It furnishes a happy *parable* of the "irrepressible conflict" between God's right and the devil's wrong. Goliath typifies the giant of Error that for forty centuries has defied the living God. Ruddy David is the Missionary Church. The five smooth stones are Gospel truths. The staff they bear is the unbroken promise of God. Before the "countless cloud of witnesses" in heaven and on earth the conflict is

joined; and all that "assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for *the battle is the Lord's*," and he will yet give the enemy into our hands.

If the stripling of Bethlehem seemed a most unequal match for the brazen-mailed giant of Gath, how much more disproportionate is the Church's missionary band to the stupendous enemy which they confront! Worldly wisdom smiles at what it styles their "weak-minded enthusiasm;" and, while it coldly commends their object, it predicts an inevitable failure. But the little band stand to their post. Rationalism derides them. Infidelity scoffs at them. The false prophet and the false priests of Baal threaten them. But yet the little band toils on. When one of their number sinks at his post, there is another ready to step forward and to take up the abandoned implements of labor. The ranks swell every year; and often a gentle woman steps forth, and with meek heroism takes up the burden of a toil that has sunk so many a strong man to his grave. Occasionally a

youthful missionary falls when he has just learned how to wield his sling. Occasionally a Lyman or a Lowrie is struck down by murderous violence. A Winslow, a Judson, and a Poor sink under the burden of the long day, and are laid to rest. A Father Goodell comes home to die. A nobler life no man can live, a sublimer death no man can die, than to live or die a missionary of the Cross!

"How beautiful it is for man to die
Upon the walls of Zion! To be called,
Like a watch-worn and weary sentinel,
To put his armor off, and rest in heaven.
What is the warrior's clarion — though its blast
Ring with the conquest of a world — to this?
What are all
The trumpetings of proud humanity
To the short history of one *who dies for souls*,
And makes his sepulchre beside the King of kings?"

(*a.*) Wherein lies the real power of the Missionary Church? (I use this term because my Bible gives me no other idea of a true church than a missionary, aggressive, reformatory, soul-saving body of working believers.) Wherein lies her power? Manifestly not in her numbers; for she embraces

less than one-fourth of the human race. Manifestly not in her earthly resources; for Mammon has more wealth than the Church, and Antichrist possesses cunninger state-craft and mightier armies. Her power lies in her living *union with the living God.* And in proportion to her closeness of union with Christ Jesus will she be sagacious in plan, steadfast of purpose, fertile in resources, zealous in labor, prevalent in prayer, and victorious in achievement. Christ is in the Missionary Church. He is *not* in heathenism, or in Moslemism, or in Rome. When he gave the Church her commission, "Go, teach all nations," he sealed up with it the priceless promise, "Lo! *I am with you* to the end of the world."

With one slender rod, Moses cleft the Red Sea asunder; but God was in the rod. With a herdsman's sling, David brought down the Philistine; but God strengthened the young shepherd's arm, and guided the fatal stone. Out from the doorway of a prayer-meeting in Jerusalem, a handful of plain people issued forth, to turn the heathen world "upside

down," and to carry the cross from the Euphrates to the Tiber. But Christ went with them and in them from that "upper chamber." Christ flamed on Peter's tongue; Christ reasoned from Paul's cultured brain; Christ spake from Apollos' lips; Christ throbbed in the pulsations of John's warm heart; Christ shone from Stephen's face, when it was like unto the face of an angel. *Lo! I am with you always*, blazed on the banners of every apostolic corps; *Lo! I am with you always*, rang as her bugle call to every march to victory. The power of that missionary apostolic Church lay in her piety; for her piety was the measure of her union with Jesus Christ. And in our day the Church's piety is the Church's power. Do not forget, my brethren, this truth of truths for a moment. The power of the missionary Church is her living, toiling, self-denying piety. For this there can be no substitute. The Church may increase her agencies as she will; she may multiply her machinery a hundred-fold; but it will be all for naught, unless Christ Jesus be the "living Spirit within the

wheels." What the missionary Church now most needs is another Pentecost. And all ye who would see new vigor in the work of missions, who would see a new zeal, a new liberality, a new inspiration in the Church at home, must besiege God's mercy-seat for powerful, soul-quickening revivals.

(*b.*) Look now with me, a moment, at another element of strength in the Missionary Church. Not only is the power of God promised to her fidelity, but the wisdom of God is visible in the choice of her materials. In our modern times, God has put His gospel faith into the *best races* on the globe. David has better blood in his veins than Goliath. The races to which God has intrusted His staff and five smooth stones of gospel truth are the same races that drew up Magna Charta and the Declaration of Independence, — the races that have made iron types to talk and iron ships to swim, — that have strung the telegraphic nerves through humanity's limbs, and have woven out of revealed law the highest forms yet reached of Christian civilization.

For the spread of His gospel, God has made Great Britain strong, and Holland industrious, and Germany learned, and has saved our American Republic as by fire. The welfare of Christianity has God bound up with the welfare of certain races and nations. If this be so, how vitally important it is that those nations who essay to Christianize other nations should themselves be Christianized to the very core!

When the diplomacy of Christian nations has been employed to outwit simple savages, and the commerce of Christian nations has been employed to cheat them; when the same ship that carried out the Bible was also freighted with opium and firearms, and with handcuffs to bind on savage limbs, we need not wonder that the very name of Christianity became an opprobrium and a terror. Only a short time ago a vessel was cleared from an American port to the coast of Africa, which carried seven missionaries in her cabin, and several hundred barrels of New England rum in her cargo! I very much fear that the con-

tents of her cargo will prove an overmatch for the contents of her cabin.

Of other nations I am not to speak. But, for my own beloved land, I rejoice to say that her Divine Deliverer seems to be preparing her for her predestined work abroad by no common discipline. What our liberated land now needs is another baptism, the baptism of Pentecost. Wherefore, all ye who long to see America's influence go forth like the morning light over every land, I pray you that ye besiege the mercy-seat for powerful, purifying Pentecostal revivals.

(*c.*) Before I close, let me remind you of another pertinent parallel between the shepherd-boy of Israel and Christ's Missionary Church. The young David of Bethlehem brought from his sheep-cote to the battle-field of Elah a hearty frame, a rustic simplicity, and an intrepid heart. Like the strong-limbed rail-hewer of our day, he was a plain-born son of toil, with the smell of mother earth on his garments. His cheek was ruddy with temperance; his sinews were

knit with athletic exercise. That rustic son of Jesse, fresh from the hills, is a beautiful type of Christ's Church in its best days, — its *days of self-denial*, — its apostolic days, when fishermen and tent-makers conquered principalities and powers, — its Reformation days, when the miner's son from Saxony, and the lean student of Geneva, smote the Papal Goliath, — its Puritan days, when Cromwell's "Ironsides" sent curl-pated cavaliers "whirling" over Marston Moor; when a band of Yorkshire farmers and herdsmen steered the "Mayflower" through wintry tempests to bleak Plymouth Rock! And in our days the missionaries of the cross have mostly come from such households as the household of Jesse. Herein lies a lesson and a warning.

Brethren! I have a prodigious fear for our metropolitan churches. I fear that fast-growing wealth is impoverishing the Church's piety; I fear that an unparalleled prosperity is making our churches luxurious, fashionable, worldly-minded, self-indulgent. The religion that walks on life's sunny side

in Paris laces, and sips its choice wines in freestone mansions, is not the religion that breeds missionaries, or fights Goliaths.

Don't you remember reading in your childhood's favorite fiction about Sinbad's voyage into the Indian Ocean? Do you remember that magnetic rock that rose from the surface of the placid sea? Silently the vessel was attracted toward it; silently the bolts were drawn out of the ship's sides, one by one, through the subtle attraction of that magnetic rock. And when the fated vessel drew so near that every bolt and clamp were unloosed, the whole structure of bulwark, mast, and spars, tumbled into ruin on the sea, and the sleeping sailors awoke to their drowning agonies!

So stands the magnetic rock of *worldliness* athwart the Church's path. If the Church draw too near, then bolt after bolt of godly purpose will be drawn out, clamp after clamp of Christian obligation will be unloosed, until the sacred argosy, that is freighted with immortal hopes, shall tumble into a shattered

and disgraceful wreck. Depend upon it, brethren, that God will never suffer this to be. He will not let us rob Him. Depend upon it, that if we lie down to luxurious slumber on couches of rosewood, while the world is perishing, He will snatch the couch from beneath us in financial judgments. If we persist in paving the way to our places of amusement and our parties of pleasure with His silver and gold, He will wrest it from us with the terrible rebuke, "Ye may no longer be my stewards!" Oh for the descent of a Pentecostal fire to consume this "wood, hay, and stubble" of pomp and luxury! O ye who long to see the self-pampering churches brought back to a hardier self-denial and a holier self-consecration! I pray you that ye besiege the mercy-seat, and labor, too, for soul-humbling, church-purifying *revivals*.

But I must not weary you with the discussion of a widening theme. As we close, we seem to be looking out upon the stupendous conflict between light and darkness, between

the hosts of truth and the hosts of error. The field of this conflict is not a narrow vale of Elah: it is the wide, wide world. Like the swarming squadrons of Philistia on the mountain-sides, stand the combined innumerable hosts of heathenism, of the false prophet, and the man of sin. Like the brazen-mailed giant of Gath, stands *Antichrist*,— proud, stubborn, impious, and defiant. As the shepherd's boy of Bethlehem came forth to confront Israel's foe, so come forth the missionary band of Christ. They are inferior indeed to the foe in numbers; but a single man, with God on his side, is in the majority. In the missionary band of Christendom are represented eighty-five different organizations. Of these, twenty-two hail from Great Britain; twenty from our beloved Union; thirteen from Germany; nine from little Holland; seven from the lands of the "Norsemen;" one from France, and the remainder from British colonies. Of these organizations, the two largest are the "Wesleyan Society" of England, and the "American Board of Foreign Missions." As the roll of

the American Board is called, three hundred and twenty missionaries answer to their names. The Presbyterian Board have two hundred and forty in the field. These are the men of whom the most eminent Scotch painter once said to me, "America has produced many great artists and authors and orators; but the most superior body of men she has yet furnished are her missionaries." Each one of them is equipped with the staff and the sling. Each one has in his scrip the five smooth stones from

> "Siloa's brook,
> That flows fast by the oracles of God."

To our weak faith, these missionary bands seem small and few for the moral conquest of the globe. But who can tell how many Martyns and Winslows and Duffs the eye of God may discern yet waiting in the household of Jesse? Who can say that there is not now upon his mother's knee another Luther, who shall lead the last great onset against the man of sin; or another Calvin, to vindicate the cross before European scepticism; or another

Wesley, to awake with Gideon's trumpet a formal church to fresh revivals and a loftier zeal? Who can tell how soon the eye of God may see an American missionary preaching Christ in the Mosque of Omar, or proclaiming the downfall of the Papacy under the frescoed dome of St. Peter's?

That time is coming! It is eighteen centuries nearer than when the first missionary concert of prayer was held in the "upper room" at Jerusalem. It is sixty years nearer than when the first American missionary sailed from Boston wharf to the shores of India. It is as sure to come as to-morrow's sunrise. Do you ask, When will that time arrive? I answer: It will come when the Church of Christ shall pray as the first missionary concert prayed at Jerusalem: it will come when all the followers of Jesus shall write *Holiness to the Lord* on every dollar in their coffers; when the Church shall consecrate all her children to self-denial and to holy toils, and shall train every David from his cradle to wield the sling! Then, all the world shall know

that God saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and on the brow of the ENTHRONED LAMB shall rest the diadem of victory.

HEBER AND HIS HYMN.

THERE have been men who have won an honorable immortality in an hour. A brave word fitly spoken, or a noble deed promptly done, has given them a place on the bead-roll of fame for ever. Sometimes in a happy moment of inspiration a poet or an orator has "said or sung" what will last for ages.

One of these happy songsters, whose grandest strain was born in an hour, but which the world shall never willingly let die, was Reginald Heber, Bishop of Christ's flock in Calcutta. If the great mass of Christians around the globe were asked to name the two English bishops whose memory is most dear to them, they would probably name Jeremy Taylor and Reginald Heber. Yet the veneration and gratitude felt towards the latter is mainly

founded upon a few lines which he threw off in a sudden inspiration, and which could be written on a single page.

Reginald Heber was born at Malpas, in Cheshire, on the 21st of April, 1783. He was a precocious boy, and at seven years of age he had translated Phædrus into English verse. His prize poem at Oxford University on "Palestine," written in his twentieth year, stands at the head of that class of somewhat ephemeral productions. His "Palestine" will live, and so will his tender and graceful lines to his wife at Bombay, and so will his nautical hymn, "When through the torn sail the tempest is streaming." But all his poetry, and his Bampton lectures, and his able *Quarterly Review* articles, are weighed down by his single matchless missionary hymn. Its composition was on this wise.

While Reginald Heber was rector of the Episcopal Church at Hodnet, in Shropshire, he went to pay a visit to his father-in-law, Dr. Shipley, then Vicar of Wrexham, on the border of Wales. Heber was in his thirty-sixth

year, and had come to Wrexham to deliver the first of a series of Sunday evening lectures in Dr. Shipley's church. In the morning of that same day, Dr. Shipley was to deliver a discourse in behalf of the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts."

On the afternoon before "Whit-Sunday" (1819), Heber and his father-in-law sat chatting with a few friends in Dr. Shipley's parlor. Dr. Shipley, knowing his son-in-law's happy gift in rapid composition, said to him, "Write something for us to sing at the service to-morrow morning." Short notice that, for a man to achieve his immortality. Heber retired to another part of the room, and in a little time had prepared three verses, of which the first one ran thus: —

"From Greenland's icy mountains;
From India's coral strand,
Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand;
From many an ancient river;
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error's chain."

Heber read the three verses over, and only altered a single word. The seventh line of the second verse was —

"The *savage* in his blindness."

The author erased that word, and substituted for it the better word *heathen*. "There, there," coolly remarked Dr. Shipley, "that will do very well." Heber was not satisfied, and said, "No, no: the sense is not complete." In spite of his father's earnest protest, Heber withdrew for a few moments longer, and then coming back read the following glorious bugle blast which rings like the *reveille* of the millennial morning: —

"Waft, waft, ye winds, the story,
And you, ye waters, roll!
Till, like a sea of glory,
It spreads from pole to pole!
Till o'er our ransomed nature,
The Lamb for sinners slain,
Redeemer, King, Creator,
In bliss returns to reign."

"What shall we sing it to?" inquired Dr. Shipley. Mr. Heber, who had a fine musical

ear, suggested a popular air called "'Twas when the seas were roaring." The suggestion was adopted, and on the next morning the people of Wrexham church listened to the "first rehearsal" of a lyric which has since been echoed by millions of voices around the globe. The air to which it was sung originally has given place, at least in our American churches, to a sonorous and lofty tune composed by Dr. Lowell Mason. The air is worthy of the hymn, and both are perfect. No profane hymn-tinker ever dared to lay his bungling finger on a single syllable of those four stanzas which the Holy Spirit moved Reginald Heber to write. Little did the young rector of Hodnet dream, as he listened to the lines sung that Sabbath morning, that he was catching the first strains of his own immortality. He "builded better than he knew." He did more to waft the story of Calvary around the earth than if he had preached like Apollos, or had founded a board of missions. In the "monthly concerts," held in New England school-houses, in frontier cabins, on the

decks of missionary ships bound to "Ceylon's Isle," and in the vast assemblies of the American Board, Heber's trumpet-hymn has been sung with swelling voices and gushing tears. It is the marching music to which Christ's hosts "keep step" as they advance to the conquest of the globe.

Heber lived but seven years after the composition of his masterpiece. In June, 1823, he departed for Calcutta as the missionary Bishop of India. For three years he toiled and travelled incessantly, and wherever he went his apostolic sweetness of character and benignity won even the "heathen in their blindness." After a laborious day's work at Trichinopoly, he went to his bath to refresh his weary frame. He remained in the bath-room until his attendants became alarmed, and when they came in they found Reginald Heber *asleep in Jesus*. His gentle spirit had stolen away to join in the "song of Moses and of the LAMB."

NOTHING BUT LEAVES.

A Reverie for the Close of the Year.

JESUS was on his way from Bethany to Jerusalem, — "hungry." He espied a fig-tree afar off, well laden with leaves. As that tree puts forth its fruit in *advance* of its foliage, when a man should discover leaves on it he would, of course, expect to find figs. The successor having already appeared, he would look for the forerunner.

Jesus hastens to the tree which had telegraphed to him already that it was in bearing condition; and lo! "he found *nothing but leaves*." Forthwith he dooms it to perpetual barrenness. "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever." The deceitful tree thus cursed of its Owner withered down to its very roots.

Here is a parable for the close of the year. It is full of tender and touching solemnity to

thousands of our readers. This parable from history teaches us the worthlessness of religious promises that are never fulfilled, and the guilt of appearing to be fruit-bearers when the eye of God sees "nothing but leaves."

There is no sin in promises. Cherry-trees must issue their white and fragrant "promissory notes" in May, or there would be no payment in delicious fruit at the end of the allotted sixty days. God makes precious promises to us; and a converted heart is only in the line of duty when it makes a solemn promise, or covenant, to the Church and its Head Christ Jesus. There is no sin in a church-covenant honestly made. The sin is in breaking it.

How full of leaves was the plausible fig-tree on the road to Bethany! How profuse of promises is many a young professor, as he stands up laden with the foliage on which the dew-drops of hope are glistening! How much his pastor expects from him. He makes no reserve when he covenants to "consecrate himself, all that he is, and all that he has, to the service of his Redeemer." As many

a reader sees this solemn sentence, it sends a pang to their hearts. That was *their* promise. They once put forth just such "leaves" before their Master's eye, and before the eyes of men, and led them to expect an abundance of fruit. For a time the glossy leaves of profession made a fair show. But when the novelty of a new position had worn off, and that time of reaction came which always follows a strong mental excitement, then the yoke began to gall the conscience, and every religious duty became an irksome drudgery. The Cross lost its charm; prayer lost its power; the Word of God lost its attraction; the very name of Jesus lost its hold; and church-membership became a hateful mask which its owner was ashamed to wear, and yet afraid to fling away. Before the world, the fig-tree still bore leaves; but beneath them was utter barrenness.

My backsliding friend! this tells the sad story of your past year's life. As you look back over the barren year now closing, you find *nothing but leaves.* Your name is still on

a church-record, but this fruitless wasted year has had no "record on high." Out of all the three hundred and sixty days that God has given you, not one has been passed with Christ, not one is marked with "a white stone" of fidelity. Instead of a sheaf, you have not gathered a single spear. Instead of leading others to Christ, you have not even followed Him yourself. Instead of growing in grace, you have lost even the self-respect which a false life always forfeits. The past is past. Fold up the pages of this dead, barren, wasted year, and write on it the bitter inscription, "Nothing but leaves."

Will you bear with a few plain truths even though they have a sharp edge? You need them, and they are spoken in love. The simple fact is that you are "backsliders in heart." The best evidence of this assertion is that you do not feel as you once felt, you do not do what you once did, you do not enjoy what you once enjoyed, you do not pray as you once prayed, and you do not live as you did in the days of your "first love." You are off the

track, and are *on* a track that leads away from heaven. You are more intent on making money, or in pleasure-hunting, or in pushing up into social promotions, than you are in serving God, or in trying to save sinners from hell. You would blush if you attempted to ask an impenitent sinner to become *what you profess to be!* Your worldly self-seekings have only been a climb up to that dizzy "mast-head" from which you may be flung off the farther into the yawning sea. If you confess your sins to God, you still cling to them. And if you dealt as faithlessly with your fellow-men as you deal with your Lord, your note or your word would not be taken by a solitary person for a moment! While you live thus, you can have no peace of conscience. While you live thus, neither the Church nor the world fully trusts you; for you once left the world to join the Church, and then slipped away from the very fellowship which you still profess to hold. While you live so, you are nullifying your pastor's labors, and voting deliberately *against* a revival of religion in your

church. Not only are you yielding "nothing but leaves," but they are the brown, withered, worthless leaves, such as the wintry winds are now whirling through the forests.

"Nothing but leaves: the Spirit grieves
Over a wasted life;
Sin committed while conscience slept,
Promises made, but never kept,
Idle words for earnest deeds, —
Nothing but leaves!

And shall we meet the Master so,
Bearing our withered leaves?
The Saviour looks for perfect fruit:
We stand before him ashamed and mute,
Waiting that word he breathes, —
Nothing but leaves!"

Such are the sad thoughts and sorrowful self-reproaches that are troubling the spirits of many professed Christians as they review the year now closing. They admit that they have backslidden from their "first love," and have borne no fruit to their Master's glory. But the best repentance for sin is to forsake it; and the only amends that can be made for neglected duties is to resume them, and perform

them at once. Do not stop, then, my brother, with sighing and sorrowing over the lost year that is just going with its accounts to God. Lay hold of the incoming year by the forelock, and begin it with a new consecration of yourself to Jesus. Go back to that deserted place of prayer. Put on the armor afresh, — humbled, yet hopeful. Seek such a reconversion as Peter had when he came out of Pilate's garden, weeping but forgiven. Make for yourself a "happy new year" by commencing a new life! "*This battle is lost*," said one of his marshals to Napoleon; "but there is time enough before sundown to *fight another and win it.*" The opening year calls us to new resolutions, new hopes, and new consecrations. It has glorious revivals in store for us, if we will but resolve — with God's help — to cover with golden fruit the boughs that have been bearing *nothing but leaves!*

HYMNS OF OUR OWN LAND.

OF all the hymns born on this side of the Atlantic, the most celebrated, and the most perfect in execution, is Dr. Ray Palmer's "My faith looks up to Thee." The history of this exquisite production, which, like Heber's missionary hymn, was thrown off "in a heat," we have already published. The venerable Dr. Muhlenberg is about telling to the world the biography of his famous lines, "I would not live alway:" probably they rank next to Palmer's in popularity among our American churches.

The first hymn ever composed by one of our countrymen, that has won permanent place in all our collections, came from that "king of New England," Timothy Dwight. While he was President of Yale College he wielded a wider intellectual and religious influence than

any man of his day in the American pulpit. His discourses on "Theology" were in every minister's study: they were a text-book for students of divinity while Andover and Princeton were in their infancy. But they have gradually been supplanted, and few of our younger clergymen ever open the four formidable but almost obsolete volumes. President Dwight will live longest in his one classic hymn, whose first verse is so familiar to us all, —

"I love Thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of Thine abode,
The Church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood."

It is a metrical version of the one hundred and thirty-seventh Psalm; and it contains one verse of pathetic sweetness, worthy of Watts or Cowper. In addressing the Church of God, he passionately exclaims, —

"For her my tears shall fall;
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given,
Till toils and cares shall end."

This fine hymn was born in the first year of

this century, while Dr. Dwight was at Yale. His more ambitious poem of "Greenfield Hill" is now forgotten, except in the families who still live on that verdant and picturesque spot. His theological treatises have climbed away into upper shelves. And the great and good Timothy Dwight, like several other good men, owes his main chance of immortality to a score or two of lines, which he could have written on a small sheet of note-paper.

The classic city of New Haven has given existence to another hymn, which Dr. Leonard Bacon says is "unsurpassed in the English language, and as near perfection as any uninspired production can be." This is rather extravagant praise of a composition which not one person in an hundred has ever heard of. But it is certainly an exquisite hymn both in thought and in diction. If any of my readers will turn to the 557th of Dr. C. S. Robinson's "Songs of the Sanctuary," they will find it under the head of "Hymns of Repentance and Reception of Christ." It opens with the utterance of lowliest abasement. In the second

verse, joy breaks in upon the penitent from the loving countenance and voice of Jesus. The third verse is "a gem of purest ray serene." My readers will thank me for giving these stanzas complete: —

"Trembling before Thine awful throne,
O Lord! in dust my sins I own;
Justice and mercy for my life
Contend! Oh, smile, and heal the strife!

The Saviour smiles! Upon my soul
New tides of hope tumultuous roll;
His voice proclaims my pardon found;
Seraphic transport wings the sound.

Earth has a joy unknown in heaven,
The new-born peace of sins forgiven!
Tears of such pure and deep delight,
Ye angels! never dimmed your sight."

The thought of this third stanza is expanded in three more verses of most magnificent imagery. So grand a hymn ought to have an air adapted to it, and it would soon become an universal favorite.

The author was Mr. Augustus L. Hillhouse, one of that cultured family from whom "Hillhouse Avenue" is named. He was born at New Haven, in 1792, and died near Paris twelve

years ago. While in France he composed this graceful and melodious hymn, and left it as a legacy of love to "that Name that is above every other."

About the year 1847, the late Dr. George W. Bethune, then pastor of a church in Philadelphia, published a hymn of rare beauty which soon found its way into nearly all the later collections. The reigning idea of this song of triumph over death is similar to that of Dr. Cæsar Malan's, "Non, ce n'est pas mourir," a French production, which has been well translated by Professor R. P. Dunn of Brown University. Before Dr. Bethune's remains were borne to their last resting-place in Greenwood Cemetery, these notes of victory were sung: —

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary road,
And 'midst the brotherhood on high
To be at home with God.

It is not death to close
The eye long dimmed by tears,
And wake in glorious repose,
To spend eternal years.

It is not death to bear
The wrench that sets us free
From dungeon chain, to breathe the air
Of boundless liberty.

It is not death to fling
Aside this sinful dust,
And rise, on strong, exulting wing,
To live among the just.

Jesus, Thou Prince of life!
Thy chosen cannot die;
Like Thee, they conquer in the strife,
To reign with Thee on high."

To many of our readers the Rev. Dr. Charles S. Robinson of New York is known as the successful compiler of the "Songs for the Sanctuary." But only a few sharp eyes may have detected his name appended to the 773d hymn as its author. Those who do not possess this volume may thank me for inserting Dr. Robinson's sweet hymn entire: —

"Saviour! I follow on,
Guided by Thee,
Seeing not yet the hand
That leadeth me;
Hushed be my heart and still,
Fear I no further ill,
Only to meet Thy will
My will shall be.

Riven the rock for me
  Thirst to relieve,
Manna from heaven falls
  Fresh every eve;
Never a want severe
Causeth my eye a tear,
But Thou art whispering near,
  'Only believe!'

Often to Marah's brink
  Have I been brought;
Shrinking the cup to drink,
  Help I have sought;
And with the prayer's ascent,
Jesus the branch has rent, —
Quickly relief he sent,
  Sweetening the draught.

Saviour! I long to walk
  Closer with Thee;
Led by Thy guiding hand,
  Ever to be;
Constantly near Thy side,
Quickened and purified,
Living for Him who died
  Freely for me!"

When that most apostolic minister of Jesus Christ, Dr. William Augustus Muhlenberg composed his world-known lines, "I would not live alway" (in 1824), it is said that he was suffering under a sore heart-sorrow. A

spirit of mournfulness over "life's woes" breathes through the poem. But in later years he has expressed some doubts whether the hymn is not too lugubrious for a "happy warrior" in the glorious service of Immanuel. In a letter now lying before me, the sunny-hearted old man says, that "Paul's 'to depart and be with Christ' is far better than Job's 'I would not live alway.'"

Like many other hymns, this precious production of Dr. Muhlenberg's genius has suffered many mutilations. The following verse, which originally closed the hymn, is now omitted from most of our books of metrical devotion: —

"That heavenly music, hark! sweet in the air,
The notes of the harpers, how clear ringing there!
And see, soft unfolding those portals of gold,
The King, all arrayed in His beauty behold!
Oh, give me, oh, give me the wings of a dove,
To adore Him, be near Him, enwrapt with His love!
I but wait for the summons, I list for the word,
Alleluia! Amen! Evermore with the Lord!"

Of one more American hymn we must speak before closing this paragraph. Its author was

my beloved friend and teacher the late Dr. Joseph Addison Alexander. He certainly never dreamed that it would find its way into any collection for public worship when he threw it off, one evening, rapidly from his versatile pen. The day after its composition he mailed it to Rev. Dr. Hall, then the editor of the "Sunday School Journal." The lines were published under the title of "The Doomed Man," and they describe with solemn and terrible energy the fate of a sinner who has "crossed the hidden boundary between God's patience and His wrath." These fearful lines are not so much a hymn as a thrilling appeal to the impenitent, in metre. They were at first circulated in small hand-bills through prayer-meetings, in seasons of revival. They went the rounds of religious journals, and finally lodged in Dr. Robinson's Hymn-book, and in one or two others. As originally written, the opening verse was —

"There is a time, we know not when,
A point, we know not where,
That marks the destiny of men
To glory, or despair."

If Hillhouse's hymn is a prelude to the minstrelsy of heaven, these solemn lines of Alexander may be styled the *dirge* of a lost soul against whom the gates of heaven are closed for ever!

BEFORE THE JUDGMENT-SEAT.

"WE shall *all* stand before the judgment-seat of Christ." The colossal dimensions of that assemblage utterly stagger me. I try to imagine all the present population of the American republic — forty millions strong — convened in one mass meeting. To them I add all the existing peoples on the globe. Then I begin to add the generations of the dead. But the tremendous total breaks me down. There is not room in one little finite mind to put the bare *idea*. But there is room in God's mind; and there will be room enough too for them all "before the judgment-seat of Christ." He who telleth all the stars of heaven by name will recognize every single individual so closely that not even a beggar-child will be missed. Each person will stand

as distinct and alone before the eye of the Judge as Warren Hastings stood before the tribunal of the House of Lords. No one must imagine that he will be "lost in the crowd," or escape that flame-bright eye.

Upon that throne of judgment, Jesus shall sit; for the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son of Man. The despised Nazarene shall then come in his glory to that great white throne, and all his holy angels with him. Is it a violent supposition that he will then bear the marks of the nails and the spear of Calvary on his glorified form? We trow not. Sinners shall then look upon Him whom they have *pierced*, and shall wail because of him. The heirs of glory shall see in those scars of the cross their title to an everlasting inheritance. It will be upon the brow that once wore the crown of thorns that the imperial diadems will then be placed. John in his vision saw "on His head many crowns."

Before that dazzling tribunal, we are told that "the books shall be opened," and that every man will be judged out of those things

which are written in the books, according to his works. The wonder grows. All the myriad millions of the globe in one assemblage! And *every act* of all these innumerable myriads brought out, and weighed, and passed upon with the most infallible equity! Yet we must accept this statement, or reject the whole revelation. For we are distinctly told that God "will bring *every* work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil." Fasten your mind to that fact, my friend. Just consider that you will be called to give account for every mercy and every moment, every talent and every trust, for every Sabbath and every sermon, for every line and letter of God's law and God's love. For *all* these the Omniscient Judge will "reckon with you." And for nothing may you expect a closer and more searching inquiry than for your use or abuse of your influence. And suppose that your influence may have thrown some fellow-creature off of the track that leads to heaven! Are you *sure* that you will be admitted to the realms of bliss

from which you have helped to keep another out? Think about this a moment before you sing again those self-assuring lines about "reading your title clear to mansions in the skies." It will certainly require an infinite wisdom in the Supreme Judge to unravel the tangled web of daily life in which so many good men have been instrumental in producing so many bad acts of their fellow-creatures. Will all these sins of God's people which *misled them into iniquity* go entirely unpunished? I tremble at the very question.

> "There's pity for the hardened knave,
> And mercy for the thief that stole;
> But God in justice ne'er forgave
> The murder of a human soul."

At that august judgment-seat every one will be dealt with in the impartial spirit of a justice that cannot err a hair's breadth. There can be no bribery in that court. No titled sinner will reap any favors from his rank. No cunning sinner can take advantage of the technicalities of law. No appeal can be made to a higher tribunal. No wily advocate can befog the case,

or move for an arrest of judgment. For once the universe will behold a tribunal on which infinite justice will preside, and dispense decisions with a spirit of ineffable love.

We learn beforehand that, in that Supreme Court, those who "*knew* their Master's will and did it not" shall be condemned to "many stripes." Oh! it will be a terrible thing to go up to that judgment-seat of Christ from before some pulpits, and out of some communities! It will certainly fare better with the poor wretch who stumbled into eternity from the heathenish haunts of Sodom, than with the cultured sinner who trampled on ten thousand Gospel truths in his guilty road to the judgment-seat. To topple over into hell from the very summit of the Hill of Zion will be a frightful fall. If faithful pastors ever shudder at that judgment-seat, it will be when they see what is becoming of some of their own congregations. The very people who once melted and wept under revival sermons may then be calling upon the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the wrath

of the rejected LAMB. Perhaps the reader of this paragraph may be one of those very people.

There is another thought which always weaves itself into every conception I ever form of the judgment scene. And that is the excruciating *separations* which that day will make. All the heart-breaking farewells of earth melt into nothing when compared with those leave-takings for an endless eternity. Who dares to conceive of them? How well I remember the shudder with which, in early childhood, I used to listen to that homely but thrilling hymn: —

> "Oh! there will be parting, parting, parting —
> At the judgment-seat of Christ,
> Brothers and sisters there will part,
> Parents and children there will part,
> Will part to meet no more!"

If we would but run that dividing line — even in our imaginations — more often now, it would make us more tenderly *faithful* to the souls of those we love. God save us from the agony of breaking away from our own children then — and for ever!

Such are a few of the thoughts which crowd into my mind as I sit to-night alone, and let the light of that tremendous judgment scene break in upon me. It is an awful mystery; but through the mystery I see clearly a righteous Saviour on his throne, a heaven of glory, a hell of torment, — and every single human being bound either to the one or to the other. With the "fierce light" of that judgment-seat beating upon our path, let us all enter upon *a year* that brings us the nearer towards it.

HIGHER!

WHAT a bugle-call the veteran Apostle sounded in the ears of his younger brethren at Colosse when he exclaimed, "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, *seek those things which are above.*" In whatever way we apply these words, whether as meaning a preparation for heaven, or a clearer view of heaven, or heavenly-mindedness, they still breathe the same spirit of aspiration. Jesus had delivered Paul's brethren from the sepulchre of sin and corruption. They had risen with Christ! Now, instead of sitting in the gates of the tomb, breathing the chill, dreary atmosphere of the charnel-house, Paul exhorts them to cast away their grave-clothes, and to live as Christ's freemen, and as the happy heirs to a magnificent inheritance. *Look* higher! — *live* higher! These two words seem to condense

the grand old man's inspiring call to his fellow-soldiers in the warfare for Christ.

There is the greatest difference in the world between the "high look" of sinful pride and the high look which every blood-bought heir of glory should fix on his everlasting inheritance. It is not only the privilege, but the *duty*, of every converted soul to realize to the utmost, and to *enjoy*, the infinite blessings which flow from a union with Jesus. If "Christ liveth in me," I ought to be a living man, — a rich man, — a cheerful, athletic man, — a holy and a happy man. I ought to enjoy the open vision of Jesus as my Prophet, my Priest, and my King. I ought to be strengthened with all might in the inner man, with long-suffering and joyfulness. I ought to be filled with the Spirit, and to rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Do the majority of God's people thus "seek the things that are *above*," and live in the higher atmosphere of perpetual fellowship with Christ? We fear not. Thousands in our churches are *barely alive*. Their pulse is

feeble. Their joys are few. Their assurance of hope is so scanty that they can only articulate, with a painful hesitation, "Well, I hope that I *am* a Christian. I think I am converted. If I can only get inside of the gate of heaven I shall be satisfied." There is no muscle in their faith, no power in their prayer, no ring in their devotions, no inspiration in their example. They see through a glass darkly, and the clouds run low in their spiritual skies.

All this poor, meagre experience is better than — *something worse.* It is better than sheer impenitence, or rank unbelief. A sick child is better than a dead child; but to make a sick child *well* is the best of all. What, then, shall these halting, feeble, doubting, and almost useless professors do? Look down? Lie down? Stay down? *No!* It is the immediate duty of every one who has been born into Christ to seek the very highest and holiest and happiest life which Divine grace can impart to them. Just what happened to the disciples when they were endowed with the "power

from on high" may, in no small measure, be the experience of every Christian in these days who will *seek* a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost, and make a complete consecration of himself to his Redeemer. What a different man Peter is in the "Acts of the Apostles" from the half-finished, crude, and inconstant Peter in the Book of John! No more denials of his Master now! No more vain boastings and cowardly lies! Peter on the day of Pentecost is as superior to Peter in Pilate's hall as a stalwart man is superior to a puny, stumbling child. He had now risen with Christ, and into Christ; he had been baptized into a clearer illumination and a more glorious *possession* of the unsearchable riches of Christ. We never hear of his ignominious fall again. He has climbed into the higher life of holy *union with his Lord.*

Something similar to this has been the experience of tens of thousands of God's people. They have come to Jesus on their knees, and sought a new baptism. They have begun to clear out the sins that monopolized

all the house-room in the heart. They have confessed their guiltiness in dragging out such a half-dead existence. They have sought a reconversion, a new quickening from on high. New light has burst in upon them. New joys have been awakened. They have *put on Christ*, and are arrayed in a robe of spiritual beauty that is "white and glistening." In the ecstasy of this fresh consecration they can sing with Charles Wesley, —

> "Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
> *More than all in Thee I find.*"

What different men and women they are in the Church of Jesus! How differently they pray! And with what spiritual *power* they approach the unconverted, and persuade them to come to the cross!

Payson of Portland had such an experience as this. The great President Edwards tells us, that, after reading a certain passage in God's Word, he had a fresh baptism from above, and "there came into his soul, and was diffused through it, a new sense of the

glory of the Divine Being." "From that time," he says, "*I began to have a new idea of Christ*, and of the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. I had a view, that was *extraordinary*, of the glory of the Son of God, and of his wonderful grace." Under this celestial baptism, he tells us that he was in a flood of tears, and wept aloud for joy!

Now this is the true "*higher life*," about which so many crude and extravagant things have been written by men of more enthusiasm than theological accuracy. What Payson, Edwards, Rutherford, and Wesley felt, *we may feel* in our humbler measure. Every child of Christ should covet it intensely. This, too, is what our churches need in this day of apathy and self-indulgence and barrenness. We need the new consecration unto Christ, and the new baptism into Christ. An ungodly world will never be converted by men and women who are barely gasping for life themselves. Brother! sister! get a new hold on

Christ if you would draw sinners from the pit!
Let your battle-song be, —

"I have done at length with trifling:
Henceforth, O thou soul of mine!
Thou must take up sword and gauntlet,
Waging warfare most Divine!
Oh, how many a glorious record
Had the angels of *me* kept,
Had I done instead of doubted,
Had I *ran instead of crept!*"

A SABBATH MORNING IN GREENWOOD.

THERE is but one Greenwood in the world. It has no peer among the cemeteries of Europe. "Kensal Green," near London, is mainly interesting from its containing the ashes of several modern men of genius, like Hood, Jerrold, and Thackeray. *Père la Chaise* is a crowded huddle of marbles, without order or comeliness. The charm of plain, unornamented "Grange Cemetery" all centres around that spot where Chalmers and Hugh Miller slumber. Among American burial-places Greenwood fairly bears away the crown. "We have seen nothing yet like this," said two of the London delegates to the Evangelical Alliance, as they sat with us, at a rich October sunset hour, on the brow of "Battle Hill," and gazed over the wonderful panorama. They ranked that view next to Niagara.

The true time to see Greenwood is when its thousands of dogwood trees are blossoming in all their glory. The creamy white contrasts with the tender green of opening leaves, as the white sea-foam flashes amid the emerald waters in a driving gale.

At every turn there is a new apocalypse of beauty. One would expect to find such a labyrinth of loveliness crowded with visitants; but Prospect Park is filled every day with throngs who go there for the hundredth time, while the matchless avenues of Greenwood show only "here and there a traveller." So true is it that the mass of mankind care less to see than to be seen.

Never did we behold Greenwood on a Sabbath morning until lately; and never before did we so feel its bewitching, subduing, and tranquillizing spell. We went at an early hour, to stand beside the open grave of a friend's only and beloved son, whose "purposes were broken off" by sudden death. It seemed almost a mockery to the heart-stricken parents, that the sun beamed so brightly and the birds

carolled their morning songs so blithely among the trees.

As we rode under the gateway to the cemetery, on the morning of a day that was a perfect "bridal of the earth and sky," we seemed to have entered another world. It was as when, of old, the women and the two disciples came "early to the sepulchre." The city of the living was left behind. The city of the dead greeted us to its voiceless streets. But no gloom clouded the pure golden air. No wails smote upon our ears. Peace, joy, praise, seemed to fill the whole leafy temple, as the strains of an organ fill the vaulted arches of a cathedral. It seemed as if Greenwood, with its congregation one hundred thousand strong, was breaking out into its morning hymn, —

> "Welcome, sweet day of rest,
> That saw the Lord arise!"

Here, too, they are keeping their Sabbath, as aforetime! Here the departed pastors are mingling with their flocks, as they once did in yonder sanctuaries. Here is gathered the vast

Sabbath school of forty thousand children, all clothed in white raiment. I see them not; yet they are beside me and around me. My own precious boy is among them. From his lips I seem to catch the familiar strain of his favorite child-hymn, —

> "Jesus loves me, he who died
> Heaven's gate to open wide.
> He has washed away my sin,
> And bade his little child come in."

Other children, in neighboring plots of green earth, take up the strain. No lessons are repeated here this morning. No sermons are delivered in this vast sanctuary. No profane pride flaunts its fineries and parades its silk and velvet in this congregation. No erudition sets the audience agape with wonder. But from the grassy homes in which the little children lie, and from the statelier vaults of marble and granite, from the heights of "Ocean Hill," and from beside the placid "Sylvan Water," there chimes forth one unbroken song of morning adoration to the Conqueror of the grave, —

"Christ the Lord is risen to-day,
Our triumphant, holy day.
Loud the song of victory raise;
Shout our great Redeemer's praise."

And so we pass along through the enchanting avenues and paths, which were to us but so many aisles in one beautiful temple. In one avenue we passed the tombs of some of our "spiritual children," who had been born unto us in the Gospel. They did not recognize their old pastor as he walked by. In another plot we discovered the name of a dear friend, whose dying-bed we had attended. She needed no more kind words of consolation. The last tear was dry.

On Forest Ridge, beneath a massive stone cross, our old friend and benefactor, Dr. Edward Robinson, has found his sepulchre. No more does he explore the streets or ruins of Jerusalem: he has entered that *new* Jerusalem, which is as a "bride adorned for her husband." Over the hill from his tomb we come to the resting-place of two sisters, one of whom had numbered one hundred years on

earth, and the other one hundred and seven! Poor old pilgrims, were they not wearied out and glad to lie down and sleep together?

On the green slope beside Crescent Water sleeps Bethune. The marble tablet at the gate bears his sweet, joyful line, "It is not death to die." My mind runs back to that Sabbath in Florence when the old home-sick pastor bade adieu to earth, to join "the brotherhood on high." We wander on further. Here, on a lofty knoll, is a superb monument, bearing the marble effigy of the sinking steamer "Arctic," and the names of several who went down with her into the deep. Voices seem to be whispering in the air· "And *the sea* gave up the dead which were in it;" "there shall be no more sea!"

And so, as we wander on, every aisle of this Greenwood sanctuary was vocal to the inner ear. The hour for worship with the living was drawing near, and we turned homeward. For one moment we halted in the little precious plot of ground, where Calverley, the sculptor, has carved the features of a sunny

child-face, which we hope yet to meet in Heaven. Under it is written, in his broken childish speech, his last Sunday-school text: "Hide me under de sadow of dy wing."

A flowering dogwood tree stands beside the spot, white with a thousand blossoms. Beautiful sentinel of the tomb! thy blossoms shall soon fall to the ground like the hopes that are buried here! But from the Sabbath air of heaven there floats down to my ear the celestial message: "They are without fault before the throne of God. They see His face and His name is written on their foreheads!"

A SONG OF PEACE.

WE close these pages with the following sweet song of peace. It issued first from the devout heart of one of God's suffering children. Mrs. Jane Crewdson of Lancashire, England, a member of the Orthodox branch of the "Society of Friends," sang this heart-song from a chamber of painful sickness. She kissed the rod of chastisement which was laid upon her, and found that, like Jonathan's "rod," it had the "taste of the honey" upon it. Many who have never seen them before will doubtless welcome them here; and will read them the more often as they draw nearer to the "Better Country."

THE LITTLE WHILE.

Oh for the peace which floweth as a river,
Making life's desert places bloom and smile;
Oh for the faith to grasp heaven's bright "for ever,"
Amid the shadow's of earth's "little while"!

"A little while," for patient vigil keeping,
To face the stern, to wrestle with the strong;
"A little while," to sow the seed with weeping,
Then bind the sheaves and sing the harvest song;

"A little while," to wear the weeds of sadness,
To pace, with weary step, through miry ways;
Then to pour forth the fragrant oil of gladness,
And clasp the girdle round the robe of praise.

"A little while," 'midst shadow and illusions,
To strive by faith love's mysteries to spell;
Then read each dark enigma's bright solution;
Then hail sight's verdict, "He doeth all things well."

"A little while," the earthen pitcher taking
To wayside brooks, from far-off fountains fed;
Then the cool lip its thirst for ever slaking,
Beside the fulness of the Fountain-head.

"A little while," to keep the oil from failing,
"A little while" faith's flickering lamp to trim;
And then the Bridegroom's coming footstep hailing,
To haste to meet Him with the bridal hymn.

And He, who is Himself the Gift and Giver,
The future glory and the present smile,
With the bright promise of the glad "for ever"
Will light the shadows of the "little while."

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